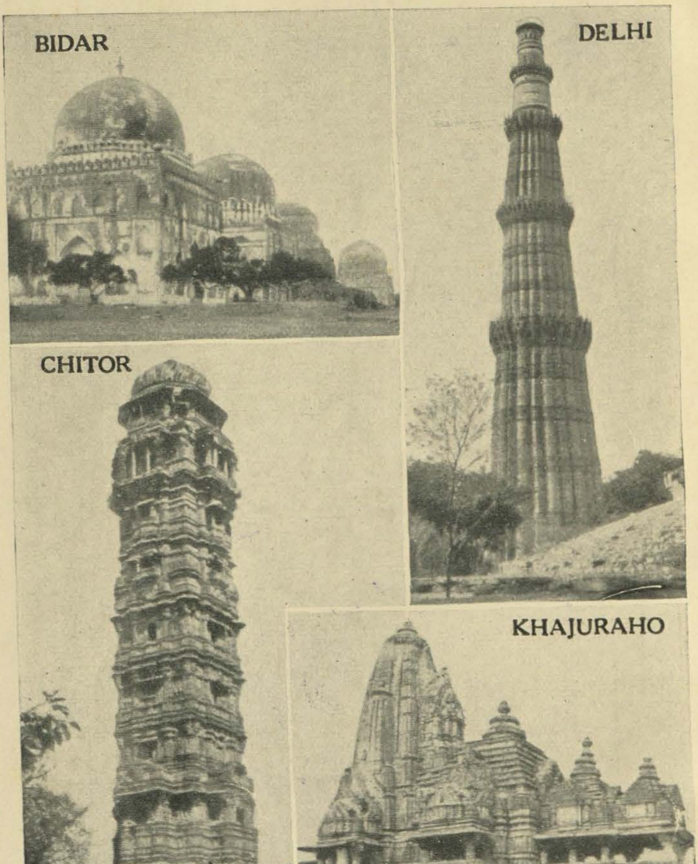
Abou Rashid



Monuments of Medieval India

THE CRESCENT IN INDIA

A STUDY IN MEDIEVAL HISTORY

BY

S. R. SHARMA, M.A.

Professor of History, Willingdon College, Sangli

Author of *Mughal Empire in India*

KARNATAK PUBLISHING HOUSE

BOMBAY 2

Printed by M. N. KULKARNI at the KARNATAK PRINTING PRESS, Chira Bazar,
Bombay, and published by him at the KARNATAK PUBLISHING HOUSE,
Chira Bazar, Bombay 2.

TO

ASPIRANTS

OF

INDIAN UNITY

"The sword of Islam was the Creator's pruning knife which removed the decaying branches and cut back the unfruitful growth of the Tree of Knowledge He had planted in Āryāvarta."

E. B. HAVELL

PREFACE

This brief study of Medieval Indian History has been designed to meet the requirements of under-graduates in Indian Colleges. It is to be considered as no more than an Introduction to a subject which has been attracting increasing attention of late in our Universities. The theme is as fascinating as it is vast. At every step the temptation to follow up its divers ramifications has been restrained in order to attain lucidity even at the risk of what scholars might consider a lack of profundity. This dominating desire will also explain the economy of foot-notes. But I have given sufficient references in the text itself to indicate my sources. More detailed documentation for the latter part of this work will be found in my *Mughal Empire in India* of which it is an abridgement. The earlier portion has been written here for the first time. The present volume deals with the history of Islam in India from its first appearance in the eighth century A.D. to the fall of the Mughal Empire in the eighteenth century A.D. The background of Hindu India has not been lost sight of. While principally concerned with the political history of the Crescent in India, I have also not ignored its social and cultural aspects. Readers will, perhaps, find that I have essayed interpretations at places which may not be quite in agreement with the views of more profound scholars than myself. But I have written under the conviction that 'History must from time to time be re-written, not because new facts have been discovered, but because new aspects come into view, because the participant in the progress of an age is led to stand-points from which the past can be regarded and judged in a novel manner.' With what result is for others than myself to judge. I shall be satisfied if this study acts as an appetiser.

Vishrambag,
June, 1937.

S. R. SHARMA

CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS

MAPS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION : DECLINE OF HINDU INDIA

A VERY facile and familiar division of history is that which makes a distinction between Ancient, Medieval and Modern. If the unity and continuity of a people's life is not lost sight of, there should be little objection to this three-fold division in time. Despite the other familiar reference to the *peoples* of India, there is substantial truth in the concept of the fundamental unity of the people of this country as distinguished from the other peoples of our continent and the rest of the world. The people of India, despite the diversity of their racial composition, maintained this unity of their character and individuality intact until the close of what might be described as the Ancient period of our history. In the succeeding age, i.e. the Medieval period, we lost that character for good or evil—it was inevitable—and a process of transformation began which has not yet been completed. It is easier to recognize the factors that brought about this change in our national life than to fix any point in chronology whence the process commenced. If, however, a dividing line must be found, the death of Harsha (647 A. D.) affords us a convenient landmark from which to date the commencement of the new epoch. India up to that date, or to about the close of that century, was characteristically and exclusively *Hindu*, using this term in its most comprehensive sense. Whatever changes took place up to that age were changes in *Hindu* India, which remained *Hindu*, enfolding in its broad bosom such divergent racial elements as Aryan and Dravidian, Scythian and Mongolian, and religious differentiations such as Brahmanism, Animism, Jainism and Buddhism. Hiuen Tsiang's India was of this composite character, but it was quite different from what it has been since. To study the nature and causes of this transformation is the main purpose of this work.

The active agent of this metamorphosis was Islam. Hinduism found in Islam a strange bed-fellow, with a character almost sturdier than its own. The capacity of Hindu society for assimilation of peoples and cultures unlike its own, before the advent of the Muhammadans,

seemed to be infinite. But the Crescent for the first time revealed its limitations. Indeed, for well nigh a millennium, Hindu society threatened to go under. Islam was in the ascendant from the advent of the Arabs in Sind (712 A.D.) to the decline and fall of the Mughal Empire at the death of Aurangazeb (1707 A. D.). Until after the final discomfiture of Alamgir it was not certain that India was not to be *Dar-ul-Islam.* But the Medieval Age in India closed with the certainty that this ancient land was to belong equally to both peoples and faiths, Muslim no less than Hindu. On what terms has not been settled yet.

The impact of these two cultures has created Modern India and its problems. The aggressive European never fully triumphed over purely Islamic countries. No one entirely succeeded in submerging India so long as she remained exclusively Hindu. It will not be unwarrantable, therefore, to attribute the subjection of India to her loss of homogeneity. The prime factor in our altered national composition has been the almost unassimilable racial and religious element introduced by Islam. The history of this impact is to us, therefore, of more than mere scholastic interest. If it is true generally that 'India as she is is a problem which can only be read by the light of Indian history,' it is doubly true of the period which forms the subject of our present study. Only through an unbiased and critical but loving study of how India came to be, 'can we grow to understand what the country actually is, what the intention of her evolution, and what her sleeping potentiality may be.'

Except in India, wherever Muhammadans succeeded in establishing themselves, they transformed society and culture beyond recognition. Islam simply came, saw and conquered. Hindu India was both weak, divided and decadent. And yet, after centuries of continuous fighting, India could not be equally submerged. Paradoxical as it might seem, therefore, India on the eve of the Muslim invasions was both weak and unconquerable. She was politically most vulnerable, but culturally all but impregnable. We shall study the two aspects separately.

A. Political History

The whole of India, from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin, had owned a single sovereign only once prior to the creation of the Turkish and the British Empires: that was under Asoka (273—232 B. C.).

The other empires of Ancient India, while they enjoyed an undoubted pre-eminence over all other contemporary kingdoms, were never co-extensive with the geographical limits of India. Nevertheless, the country was not defenceless against external aggression during the tenure of such mighty empires like those of the Guptas and Harsha. Kingdoms and empires, no doubt, rose and fell within the country, like waves in the ocean, but the political integrity of India was never permanently impaired by foreign invaders. Such of them as held temporary sway over the north-western regions were soon absorbed within the body politic. But this political vitality was as much due to external circumstances as to internal strength. The Greeks, the Scythians and the Huns were mere oceanic waves breaking on the Indian shore ; they were not tides that had an internal momentum which would have carried them into the heart of the country, flooding its entire being. Such a tide had come only once in the ancient history of India, viz., with the Aryan immigrations. Then was India completely conquered and transformed. Another such human flood was rising at the death of Harsha (647 A. D.). It was in the shape of Islam. We shall gauge its magnitude in the next chapter. Here we must survey the field that was as it were thirsty for the inundation.

There were four zones of political life in India, viz., (1) the Himalayan, (2) the Indo-Gangetic (Hindustan), (3) the Deccan, and (4) Southern peninsular India. Within each of these regions kingdoms rose and fell. At times they invaded one another's spheres of activity, but never attained a stable sovereignty over an area sufficiently large to cast a penumbra of political power on the country as a whole. To realise the exact situation it is necessary to watch the kaleidoscope at work.

I. The Himalayan States

In the northernmost group were Kashmir, Nepal and Assam.

(a) *Kashmir* : The history of Kashmir as a Hindu kingdom dates from at least the days of Asoka. Its legendary and historical annals may be read in its interesting poetical chronicle, the *Rāja-taraṅgiṇi*, composed by Kalhaṇa (Kalyāṇa) in the twelfth century A.D. Several Hindu dynasties ruled over the state in succession down to its conquest by the Muhammadans in 1339 A. D. These being of purely local interest, we might pick out only a few samples of its rulers to show the political character of the kingdom. The domi-

nance of women, court intrigue and palace revolutions fill the annals of Kashmir for the most part. One of its great rulers, of the Karkota family, Muktāpīda (Lalitāditya) defeated and killed Yasovarman of Kanauj about 740 A. D. He also built the great Sun temple of Mārtānd the ruins of which still exist. The Karkota dynasty was displaced by the Utpalas in the middle of the ninth century. Avantivarman (855-83 A. D.) of this dynasty distinguished himself by his great constructive achievements. With the help of his able minister Sūra and his great engineer Suyya, he built new towns, carried out great irrigation works, drained marshes and protected the valley from the perennial danger of avalanches. Modern Sōpur (Suyyapura) commemorates the great builder of Kashmir in the ninth century. Unfortunately, Avanitvarman was succeeded, after a civil war, by Śankaravarman (883-902 A.D.) who made himself notorious by his extortionate greed, oppressive taxation and temple looting. After a series of revolutions in which the *tantrins* and *ekāngas* (soldiers and military police) played a prominent part, ultimately a queen, Didda, ascended the throne. She dominated the kingdom for nearly fifty years (958-1003 A. D.) together with her favourites, especially Tunga. The latter is to be remembered for an expedition he led against Mahmūd of Ghazni, though it ended in failure. This is the first reference we have to Musalmans in the history of Kashmir. The Lohāra dynasty, which succeeded the Utpalas, produced perhaps the worst ruler Kashmir ever had, though he bore the great name of Harsha (1089-1101 A. D.). In the estimation of Kalhaṇa, 'cruelty and kind-heartedness, liberality and greed, violent self-willedness and reckless supineness, cunning and want of thought—these and other apparently irreconcilable features in turn display themselves in Harsha's chequered life.' He is rightly styled 'the Nero of Kashmir.' Already Muhammadan infiltration into the kingdom had commenced. Muhammadan contingents participated in the civil strife. The Lohāra dynasty too came to an end with the death of its last ruler, Vantideva, in 1172 A. D. Confusion was worse confounded by a Muslim invasion, during the reign of Suhadeva (1301-20 A.D.). All able-bodied men were carried away as slaves and the Muslims left desolation behind them. After a short interlude of Tibetan rule, Kashmir came under its first Muslim ruler Sāhamera (Shāh Mir) with the title of Shams-ud-dīn in 1339 A. D. Sāhamera had been an able Muslim in the service of Suhadeva.

(b) *Nepal*: The kingdom of Nepal, on account of its peculiar

isolated position, has played little part in the history of India. Though occasional attempts were made to annex it, even by remotely situated rulers like the Chālukya Vikramāditya VI, the mountain kingdom always retained its independence. Nepal first came into contact with the Muhammadans in the fourteenth century (1320-25 A. D.) under the Tughlaks. Then the little kingdom of Tirhut was destroyed, and its capital, Simraon, was sacked.

(c) *Assam*: Assam, too, on account of its remoteness, does not much concern us. Its ruler Ratnapāla boasted of several victories, counting among them one over Chālukya Vikramāditya VI (1076-1126 A. D.) and another over the Chola Rājendra I (c. 1023 A.D.). Marauding bands of, presumably, Muslims, the Bhāhikas and Taikas, are also mentioned among those defeated by Ratnapāla. But the more definite contact with the Muslims came about in the thirteenth century. In 1205 A.D. Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar led a disastrous expedition into Tibet through Assam. Only a hundred out of the 10,000 escaped with their lives. Assam itself was invaded in 1258 A. D. with no better result. Indeed, even as late as in the days of Aurangazeb, in the seventeenth century, Assam continued to be the Valley of Death to the Muslims. In the words of Mir Jumla, 'Assam is a wild and dreadful country abounding in danger... Fatal to life is its expanse like the unpeopled city of Destruction... In short, every army that entered the limits of this country made its exit from the realm of Life; every caravan that set foot on this land deposited its baggage of residence in the halting place of Death.'

II. The States of Hindustan

Hindustan, or the land enclosed between the Himalayas in the north and the Vindhyas in the south, stretching from Afghanistan in the west to Assam in the east, was the home of a congeries of Hindu kingdoms, on the eve of the Muslim invasions. The unbroken flatness of this vast plain and the facilities afforded by its reticulated river system, made conquest an easy job. Hence, the history of North India was for long a chronicle of innumerable states, forming, dissolving, and forming again. Their individual annals are but the alphabet of the language of the political history of the land as a whole; their meaning lies more in their concatenation, than in their isolation. The letters of this alphabet were—Gāndhāra, Sind, Kanauj, Gujarāt, Mālwa, Sāmbhar, Mahoba, Chedi, Magadha, Bengal, Kām-

bhoja and Kalinga. Differently articulated, they read—Brāhmaṇ Shāhis, Rāis, Paramāras, Gurjara-Pratihāras, Chauhāns, Chāndels, Chālukyas (Solānkis), Kālachuris, Pālas, Senas, etc. They all embodied but one idea, " Self-aggrandisement " ; and spelt but one way, " RUIN." Let us see how they did this. It is convenient to take them in the perspective of their bearing on the Muslim invasions.

(d) *The Rāis of Sind* : The first Muslim invasion of India was through Sind ; its details will follow in the next chapter. At that time Sind was ruled by a Brāhmaṇ dynasty founded by Chach, if Arab chroniclers are to be trusted. According to Hiuen Tsiang, however, who visited Sind in the reign of Chach, he was a Sūdra and a Buddhist. Before him were five kings of the Rāi dynasty who ruled for 137 years.

(e) *The Brāhmaṇ Shāhi of Gāndhāra* : In the Kabul valley, Hiuen Tsiang also found a Kshatriya ruler. The last of that dynasty, named Lagatūrmān, reigned at the end of the ninth century. He was overthrown by his Brāhmaṇ minister named Kallār, who founded a new dynasty to which belonged the famous Jayapāla, Ānandapāla and Trilochanapāla, about whom more in the third chapter. We have references to these, in the *Rājatarangiṇi*, which are confirmed by Muslim chroniclers and the testimony of extant coins. Under pressure of the Muhammadans, Jayapāla appears to have relinquished the Kabul valley and founded his new capital at Bhātinda, in the modern Patiāla state, as a better centre from which to defend the Punjab. The Arabs describe him as ' the ruler of Hindustan.'

(f) *The Paramāras of Mālwa* : Originally belonging to Mt. Ābu, the Paramāras under Upendra (or Krishnarāja) conquered Mālwa early in the ninth century A. D. Harshasimha, one of his successors, fought against the Hūṇas and plundered the Rāshtrakūta capital Mānyakheta, in 972 A. D. His son, Munja (Vākpati II) is said to have conquered the Karnātas, Lātas, Keralas and Cholas, and also to have defeated Yuvarāja, the Kālachuri king of Chedi (modern C. P.). Whatever be the exaggeration in this claim, it is true that Munja successfully invaded the Chālukya territory no less than six times ; but when he made one more attempt to cross the Godāvarī, he was captured and put to death by Tailapa II, about 995 A. D. The greatest king of this dynasty, however, was Bhoja, who ruled from about 1010 to 1065 A. D. This is not the place to assess the versatility of his genius. But he shared the urge of the age, namely,

the itch for conquest. He carried on incessant warfare with all the surrounding kingdoms—Chedi, Lāta and Karnāta—and incurred the enmity of all his neighbours. While Bhīma I, Chālukya (Solānki) king of Gujarat, invaded Sind, Bhoja attacked Gujarat; likewise, Bhoja himself, in his turn, was attacked by the southern Chālukya Someshwara II, and put to flight. This is typical of the political dog-fights of the age. Bhoja was involved in fighting to the end of his long reign. Though he appears to have successfully parried the thrusts of the Turushkas during his life time, his successors were too weak to withstand the Muslim inroads of the twelfth century.

(g) *The Solānkis of Gujarat*: The authentic Hindu history of Gujarat may be dated from the seizure of Anhilwārā, in 765 A. D., by Vanarāja of the Chāvda family. The last ruler of this dynasty was slain, in 961 A. D., by his own son-in-law, Mūlarāja, the founder of the new and more famous dynasty of the Chālukyas or Solānkis of Anhilwārā. The greatness of this ruler is much applauded by Jaina historians, but the outward marks of it included the usual wars of aggression and defence, in this instance against Cutch, Kāthiāwār and Ajmer. The martial traditions of Mūlarāja were continued by his successors. Bhīma I's expedition into Sind has already been alluded to above. It was thence that 'the sack of Anhilwārā' became proverbial on account of the annihilation of Bhīma's capital city at the hands of Bhoja's general Kulachandra. But even more famous than the sack of Anhilwārā during this reign was the historic destruction of the temple of Somnāth by Mahmūd of Ghazni, in 1025 A.D. However, the Solānki Bhīma, unlike his epic name-sake, though brave against his Hindu neighbours, took to his heels before the Muslim invader. More about Gujarat and the Solānkis in succeeding chapters.

(h) *The Gurjara-Pratihāras of Ujjain*: The earliest specific reference to the Gurjaras is found in Bāṇa's *Harshacharita* and in the Aihole inscription of Pulakesin II. Both refer to the defeat of the Lātas, Mālavas and Gurjaras. The Pratihāras were one of the clans of the Gurjaras. After the death of Harsha, the Gurjaras established themselves at three centres, viz., Jodhpur, Avanti and Broach. c. 725-35 A. D. the Arabs under Junaid swept over the Gurjara territories, but the Nausāri grants of 738 A. D. mention the ultimate defeat of the Arabs, of which we get partial confirmation in the writings of the Arab historian, Balādhuri. We have also evidence from diverse quarters of the strong position of the Gurjara-Pratihāras

of Avanti (Ujjain) who successfully stemmed the tide of the Mlechchas surging through western India in the eighth century. Their leader was Nāgabhata (725-40 A. D.).

Under Vatsarāja, the fourth king of the Avanti line (775-800 A. D.), a three-cornered struggle began between the Gurjaras, the Pālas of Bengal and the Rashtrakūtas of the Deccan, for the hegemony of North India. Vatsarāja's son, Nāgabhata II (c. 800-25 A. D.), forming alliances with eastern and western powers, like Kalinga and Sind, got the better of Dharmapāla of Bengal. A numerous Pāla army was defeated at Monghyr, on the one hand, and Chakrāyudha of Kanauj, a feudatory of Dharmapāla, was overthrown on the other. But the Gurjaras, for a time at least, could do little against their southern rivals, the Rāshtrakūats. Govind III, of the latter dynasty, worsted both Nāgabhata and Dharmapāla, and carried his victorious arms to the foot of the Himalayas. However, days of greater glory were yet in store for the Pratihāras. Under their greatest ruler, Mihira Bhoja, who reigned for nearly fifty years (c. 840-90 A.D.), they once more resolved to conquer the three worlds. Bhoja soon made himself Emperor over all North India, excluding only Sind and Kashmir, with his capital at Kanauj. Though he was an avowed enemy of the Arabs, we have Arab testimony to the magnificence of his cavalry, and the freedom from crime in his vast dominion. But under Bhoja's successors, in the tenth century, the fortunes of the Pratihāras waned. The Rāshtrakūtas once more carried their triumphant arms northward, and Indra III occupied Kanauj for a time. Minor powers and principalities, like the Chāndels, the Chālukyas, and the Chedis, shattered and scattered the great Empire. But however reduced in their imperial power, the Gurjara-Pratihāras continued to resist the Muslim advance into Hindustan until the last decade of the tenth century. In 991 A. D. the king of Kanauj (Rājyapāla) heroically stood by Jayapāla, though only to share in the Hindu defeat, in the great battle of the Kurram valley. Again in the battle of Peshawar, in 1008 A.D., the Gurjaras were on the side of Ānandapāla. But it was increasingly becoming a vain struggle. Mahmūd of Ghazni occupied first Mathura, then Kanauj. Rājyapāla, having to fight simultaneously against a combination of his internal enemies under the leadership of the Chāndels and the Muslim invaders, finally succumbed. His son Trilochanapāla continued the struggle, falling upon Allahabad for a time. Kanauj remained in Hindu hands for another century, un-

der the Gāhadavālas. Then came the Muslim flood.

(i) *The Chauhāns of Ajmer*: The dynasty, to which the famous Prithvirāja belonged, was long ruling over Sāmbhar in Rājputāna and was there known as the Chāhumānus. In the eighth century the Chauhāns appear to have resisted the further advance of the Arabs of Sind. Ajmer was founded at the end of the eleventh century by Ajayadeva of this family. The dominions of the Chauhāns were further extended under Vigraharāja, the uncle of Prithvirāja. The exploits of Rāi Pithaura, as the latter is called by Muslim historians, are glowingly described in the *Chānd-rāisa* the popular epic of Rājasthān. His dramatic abduction of Sanjogata, the daughter of Jayachandra of Kanauj, is one of the most popular tales of Hindustan. Of his political adventures the best known are his invasion of the territory of the Chāndels and the defeat of their king Paramardi, and his heroic resistance to Muhammad Ghūri, against whom he won the first battle of Tarāori in 1191 A.D. But in his final engagement at the same place Prithvirāja was not only defeated but captured and executed, while his local enemy Jayachandra stood aloof and chuckled, if he was not actually in league with the Muslims.

(j) *The Gaharwārs of Kanauj*: The villain of the above episode, Jayachandra, himself fell a victim to Muhammad Ghūri's able general Aibak, the very next year (1193 A. D.) after the fall of his son-in-law. The family to which Jayachandra belonged was the Gaharwārs, the Gāhadavālas who had displaced the Pratihāras. Its greatest ruler was Govindachandra (1112-55 A. D.) who successfully defended Benares against the Muslims and took Patna from the Pālas, thus extending his dominion from Kanauj to Bihar. But under his grandson, Jayachandra, the Muslims occupied Benares, destroyed its temples and erected mosques on their ruins.

(k) *The Chāndels of Mahoba (Jejākabhukti)*: Prithvirāja Chauhān's defeat of Paramardi (Parmāl) of this dynasty has already been referred to above: this was in 1182 A.D. The Chāndels of Bundelkhand were a sturdy and intrepid people of Gond race and played an important part in medieval history. They carried on incessant warfare against all their neighbours, the Gaudas, Kosalas, Mālavas, Chedis, Kālachuris and Gurjaras. They had their capital at Mahoba, and Yasovarman of this dynasty (930-50 A. D.) greatly consolidated his power by his conquest of the fortress of Kālinjar. He was also the builder of the great temple of Khajurāho for which

he forcibly carried away a famous image of Vishnu from the ruler of Kanauj. Yasovarman's son, Dhanga, became even more famous. He ruled for fifty years, 950-99 A. D. and was one of the leading Hindu rulers who joined the grand coalition summoned by Jayapāla to fight against Sabuktagin. His son, Ganda, enraged at Rājyapāla's surrender to Mahmūd of Ghazni (referred to above) despatched a formidable force against him and slew the Gurjara prince, in 1019 A. D. The last ruler of any importance of this dynasty was Paramardi or Parmāl already mentioned more than once. He was defeated by Kutb-ud-dīn Aibak, in 1203 A. D., when the fortress of Kālinjar, famous in medieval history, was captured by the Muslims. Its temples were converted into mosques, its vast treasures were looted, and thousands of Hindus taken away as slaves.

(l) *The Kālachuris of Chedi (C. P.)*: These do not merit any elaborate treatment. They were an ancient family ruling over Central India, and fought against Mihira Bhoja of Kanauj, Bhoja of Mālwa, Krishna II Rāshtrakūta, Someshwara I Chālukya, as well as the Pālas and Kalingas, to mention only a few of the best known incidents in their political history. By the close of the twelfth century they became insignificant, being supplanted by the Bāghelas, and finally overwhelmed by the Muhammadans.

(m) *The Pālas and Senas of Bengal* : We need not trace the history of Bengal prior to the creation of the Pāla kingdom by Gopāla about 765-70 A. D. Under its next ruler, Dharmapāla (770-815 A. D.), the kingdom became very strong and aggressive. The triune struggle for hegemony over North India between the Pālas, Rāshtrakūtas and the Gurjaras has already been alluded to. Dharmapāla carried his arms as far as Kanauj and set up Chakrāyudha as its ruler, dependent on himself. But in his rivalry against Vatsarāja and Nāgabhata II (Gurjaras) Dharmapāla played into the hands of the Rāshtrakūtas. Under Mihira Bhoja of Kanauj, Bengal was invaded and Magadha annexed to the Pratihāra Empire, at the close of the ninth century. Though Bengal recovered much of its lost territory during the period of the decline of the Gurjaras, the Rāshtrakūtas under Krishna II and Indra III, and even the distant Cholas under Rājendra I (1023 A. D.) made further incursions into the rich provinces of north-eastern India. After a partial recovery, about 1020 A.D., under Mahipāla I, Vikramāditya Chālukya invaded Gauda and Kāmarūpa (Bengal and Assam), c. 1044-62 A.D. Apart from these invasions from the south

there were enemies nearer home like the Kāmbhojas in the east and the Gāhadavālas in the west. In the midst of these attacks the Pāla dynasty, becoming weaker every successive generation, at last succumbed to the Muslims, about 1199 A. D.

The Senas were a Karnātak family who must have settled in Bengal during the invasion of that kingdom by Chālukya Vikramāditya. The real founder of Sena power appears to have been Vijayasena, who ruled from 1100-1165 A.D. "In his Deopara inscription he claims that he defeated Navya and Vīra, attacked the lord of Gauda, humbled the king of Kāmarūpa, protected the king of Kalinga, made many lesser rulers captive, and sailed his fleet up the Ganges." Lakshmaṇasena, grandson of Vijayasena, extended Sena dominion to Benares and Prayāga in the west, Kāmarūpa in the east and Puri in the south. By this time the Pālas of west Bengal had been swept away. Muhammad Ghūri had taken Delhi in 1193 and Kanauj in 1194. At the same time Muslim arms were carried further east. The destruction of Benares has already been referred to. Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar, one of Kutb-ud-dīn's lieutenants, advanced rapidly into Bihar, took Nadiya (Lakhnauti) and overthrew Lakshmaṇasena (before 1205 A. D.). The details of this adventure are highly controversial, but there seems little doubt left about the lightning speed with which the Muslim conquest of western Bengal was achieved. In eastern Bengal the progress of Muslim arms was slower. Even then by the middle of the thirteenth century no trace of Hindu rule was left in Bengal.

III. The Deccan States

The skein of South Indian history is not easier to unravel than that of the numerous kingdoms of the north. Here again for the sake of clearness we must make our treatment selective. We shall approach this subject only with a view to appreciate its bearing on the Muslim conquests in the south. The first Muslim to cross the Vindhyas was Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī, in 1294 A.D., just a hundred years after Muhammad Ghūri's subjugation of North India. By the end of 1312 A. D. the Muslims under Malik Kāfur had penetrated to the extreme end of the peninsula and built a mosque in Madura the ancient capital of the Pāndyas. We shall rapidly sketch the situation as it ripened to this culmination. It is convenient for this purpose to separate the history of the Deccan from that of the southern kingdoms.

To the first group belonged the Yādavas of Deogiri, the Rāshtrakūtas of Mānyakheta (Malkhed), the Chālukyas of Vātāpi (Bādāmī), Kalyāṇi and Vengi, as well as the Kadambas of Banavāsi, the Kākatiyas of Wārangal, the Gangas of Mysore, and the Hoysalas of Dwārasamudra. To the latter group belonged the Pallavas of Kānchi (Conjeevaram), the Cholas of Tanjore, the Pāndyas of Madura, and the Cheras of Malabar.

(n) *The Chālukyas* : The greatest of the early Chālukyas, Pulakesin II, was a contemporary of Harshavardhana of Kanauj. The two great princes practically divided between them the hegemony of North and South India. Pulakesin died in 642 A. D. fighting against his southern rivals the Pallavas of Kānchi. The latter on this occasion destroyed the Chālukya capital Vātāpi or Bādāmi (in the Bijapur district). The kingdom of Vengi (between the Krishna and Godāvarī) was a collateral line founded by Vishnuvardhana, a brother of Pulakesin II. For two hundred years after Kīrtivarman II of Vātāpi, who ascended the throne in 746 A. D., the Rāshtrakūtas of Mānyakheta (Malkhed in Nizām's dominions) eclipsed the Chālukya power. Then the Chālukya kingdom was revived by Taila II in the last quarter of the tenth century (973-97 A. D.). One of his renowned successors, Someshwara I made Kalyāṇi (in Nizām's territory) his capital, whence these later Chālukyas came to be called the Chālukyas of Kalyāṇi (1053 A. D.). As the earlier Chālukyas were engaged in incessant wars with the Rāshtrakūtas and Pallavas, so their later descendants were in ceaseless conflict with the Paramāras and Kālachuris in the north and the Cholas in the south. The military excursions of Vikramāditya VI of this dynasty in North India have already been mentioned. He is similiarly said to have carried Chālukya arms to the south against the Cholas and Cheras. Vikramāditya commemorated his victories by beginning a new era—the *Chālukya-Vikrama-Kāla*—in 1076 A.D. and his court poet, Bhillaṇa, immortalised his hero in his celebrated *Vikramānkadeva-charita.* But the dynasty with varying fortunes continued only for a little over another century and ended in 1190 A. D.

(o) *The Rāshtrakūtas and Yādavas* : These two dynasties of the Deccan, ruling respectively from Malkhed and Deogiri, being the successive rivals of the Chālukyas, may be dealt with together. Dantidurga Khadgāvaloka (c. 753 A. D.) was the real founder of Rāshtrakūta ascendancy over the Chālukyas. His uncle and successor

Krishna I, the excavator of the great Kailāsa temple of Ellura, in the words of an inscription 'snatched the goddess of fortune from the Chālukya family and made the boar (symbol of the Chālukyas) flee like a timid deer.' The exploits of his grandson, Govinda III (783-815 A. D.) have been more than once alluded to above. He fought against the Gurjaras, Pallavas and the Eastern Chālukyas of Vengī. Another of his celebrated successors, Indra III, also carried his arms to the north contending with the Pālas and Gurjaras for supremacy in Hindustan. But in 973 A. D. the dynasty came to an end, being overthrown by Taila II, the founder of the Chālukya house of Kalyāṇi.

The Yādavas were originally vassals of the Western Chālukyas. Under Bhillama III, about 1187 A. D., the family assumed sovereign authority. He was also the founder of their new capital city, Deogiri. The Yādavas fought against the Kākatiyas of Wārangal and the Hoysalas of Dwārasamudra who were trying to extend their power in the Deccan. Though successful over these rivals, under Rāmachandra (1271-1310 A. D.) and his immediate successors, the kingdom of Deogiri fell before Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī and Malik Kāfur (1294-1312 A. D.), never to rise again.

(p) *The Kadambas, Gangas and Hoysalas* : These three kingdoms of Karnātak also rose and fell during the period of our present survey. The first two had their beginning quite early and continued to flourish till the rise of the greater power of the Hoysalas. The Kadambas ruled over the Kanara and north Karnātak districts while the Gangas ruled over Mysore. Early in the twelfth century (1130 A. D.) Hoysala Vishnuvardhana invaded the Kadamba territory and destroyed its capital cities of Banavāsi and Hangal. The Hoysalas themselves were a comparatively new power. Though they claimed a very ancient lineage, they figure in history only from the commencement of the eleventh century A. D. Then they grew at the expense of the Cholas and Pāndyas in the south, and the Kadambas and Chālukyas in the north. But by the time a real conflict was developing between the two for hegemony over the Deccan, the foreigner was already at their gates. After the fall of Deogiri, Malik Kāfur sacked Dwārasamudra (Halébīd in Mysore State), the capital of the Hoysalas, and took its king Vīra Ballala III prisoner to Delhi (1310 A.D.). At the same time was Goa, where the Kadambas were still ruling, destroyed by the Khaljī general. The last blow at the Kadambas of

the Konkan was dealt by Muhammad Tughlak in 1327 A. D. According to Ibn Brattūta, the Muslims were invited to the Konkan by a rebel son of the Kadamba king.

(q) *The Kākatiyas of Wārangal* : The last dynasty we have to notice in the Deccan is that of the Kākatiyas of Wārangal. They really belonged to Telingana or the Telugu districts. Wārangal (in the eastern part of Nizām's dominions) was built by Prolarāja of this dynasty in 1130 A. D. His son Pratāparudradeva I (c. 1163) is said to have conquered the Yādavas and the king of Orissa, whereas, another ruler of the dynasty, Gaṇapati, claims a victory over the Cholas (1199 A. D.). The last but one ruler of the Kākatiya family was the queen Rudramma (1261 A.D.) who, according to Marco Polo, ruled wisely and well. Her successor Pratāparudra II (1291-1330 A. D.) was the last of the Kākatiyas. Before his death, in 1330 A. D., the ubiquitous Malik Kāfur had entered Wārangal. Pratāparudra tried to save himself by offering the Muslim invader a vast quantity of gold and jewellery. But the inevitable happened. Pratāparudra was taken prisoner to Delhi and was enabled to return to his kingdom before his death only as a vassal of the Sultan.

IV. The Kingdoms of South India

As already stated, to this group belonged the Pallavas of Kānchi, the Cholas of Tanjore, the Pāndyas of Madura and the Cheras (Keralas) of Malabar. Though situated in the extreme south, none of them proved immune to the far-penetrating arms of Delhi.

(r) *The Pallavas* : Obscure in their origin the Pallavas are supposed to have been a dynasty of foreign rulers rather than a tribe of South India. Suffice it for our purposes to note that their kingdom was already a powerful rival to Pulakesin II in the days of Harsha. It was Narasimhavarman the Great (c. 630-68 A.D.) of this dynasty that destroyed Vātāpi, the capital of the Chālukyas and killed Pulakesin II (642 A.D.). He is also said to have repeatedly defeated the Cholas, the Pāndyas and the Cheras. He even successfully invaded Ceylon more than once. The wars of the Pallavas in successive reigns need not detain us. They were waged against the Chālukyas and Rāshtrakūtas in the north, the Gangas in the west, and the Cholas and Pāndyas in the south. The last of the Pallavas was Aparājita. His pretentious name ('the unconquered') was falsified by his defeat at the hands of Āditya I of the Chola dynasty,

and with him ended the Pallava power, at the close of the ninth century.

(s) *The Cholas* : Though the history of the Cholas is very ancient, what is relevant to our study is the revival of Chola power after the victory of Āditya I mentioned above. His son Parāntaka's exploits (907-947 A. D.) may be inferred from his titles, viz., *Maduraiyam Ilamum Kondan*, i.e. conqueror of Madura and Ceylon. His eldest son, Rājāditya, died fighting against Krishna III Rāshtrakūta. The greatest of the Cholas were Rājarāja the great (985-1016 A. D.) and his son Rājendra Gangaikonda (1016-42 A. D.). Under these two rulers the Cholas became not only masters of South India, but carried their arms and established their renown over the banks of the Ganges as well as in Greater India across the seas. Their conquests included the territories of the Pāndyas, Cheras, Simhala, Gangas, Eastern and Western Chālukyas, the Kadambas, Rāshtrakūtas and Kalingas. From the last of these as the base of operations, the Cholas, in Samudragupta fashion, made a *digvijaya* of Bihar and Bengal, turning thence into Burma, the islands of the Bay of Bengal, the Indian Archipelago (Java, Sumātra, etc.). This grand detour was celebrated in the foundation of the new Chola capital, Gangaikonda-Cholapuram. But after all these triumphs the Chola power did not endure. Rajendra Chola died in 1042 A. D. His legacy of Empire was indeed a legacy of wars, perhaps only defensive under his less able successors. By 1117 A. D. the transmarine possessions were definitely lost under Kulottunga I (1070-1118 A.D.). Under Rājādhirāja II and Rājendra III there were civil wars, and rebellions of vassal chieftains. Under these circumstances, outlying powers like the Hoysalas of Dwārasamudra, (e.g. under Someshvara, 1220-35 A.D.), the Pāndyas of Madura (under the three successive Sundara Pāndyas, 1216-75 A. D.) and the Kākatiyas of Wārangal (particularly under the queen Rudramma, 1260-1291 A.D.), made haste to consolidate and extend their own territories at the expense of the Cholas.

(t) *The Pāndyas* : Originally subject to the Cholas (995-1216 A. D.) the Pāndyas recovered their independence under circumstances described above. Māravarman Sundara Pāndya I (1216-39 A. D.) carried fire and sword into the Chola dominion and under his grandson Jātavarman Sundara Pāndya (1251-68 A. D.) Madura reached the zenith of its power. Besides overwhelming the Cholas, Jātavarman appears to have driven the Hoysalas from Kannanur (north of

Srirangam), occupied Kānchi and defeated Gaṇapati the Kākatiya king. He extended his power up to Nellore. His successor Kulashe-khara (1268-1311 A. D.) conquered Quilon and Ceylon, according to the Buddhist chronicle *Mahāvamsa* (1284 A.D.). But even while Kulashekara was alive civil war ensued between his legitimate son, Sundara, and his natural son, Vīra Pāṅdya. The former, it is alleged, murdered his father and invoked the assistance of Malik Kāfur, the pioneer of Muslim dominion in South India (1310-11 A. D.). Thus ended the glory of the Pāndyas.

(u) *The Cheras* : We have only one more of the ancient Dravidian kingdoms of South India to notice. The period of Chera ascendancy was long anterior to Muslim advance into South India. Its greatest ruler Senguttuvan Chera (2nd century A. D.) belongs half to legend and half to history. One of the Perumals (Cheramān), as the later rulers of Malabar were called, was wrongly believed to have become a convert to Islam and died during his pilgrimage to Mecca. This line of rulers became extinct in the ninth century A. D. and then followed the Kulashekara Perumāls, the ancestors of the present rulers of Travancore. It is interesting to note that Malabar came under Muslim influence long before the days of Malik Kāfur. According to the *Tuhfut-ul-Mujahaddin* of Sheikh Zain-ud-dīn, himself a Malabar Muslim living at the court of Sultan Adil Shāh of Bijapur, the Muslim settlement of Malabar began as early as the days of the Prophet himself. But more authentic history dates it from about the eighth century A.D.

B. SOCIETY AND CULTURE

The outline of political history given above must enable the reader to visualise the weakness of India during the centuries intervening between the death of Harsha (647 A. D.) and the Muslim penetration to the extreme south of the peninsula (1312 A. D.). Never was India politically more vulnerable than during these nearly seven centuries. There was no single paramount power either in North or South India that could have withstood the invader single-handed. Nor was there any sense of unity that would have brought the innumerable states together even in the face of common danger. North India under the Pratihāras and South India under the Cholas appeared for a time to realise that unity which, had it lasted longer, might have saved the country. But even the success of these two powers

was of an accidental and precarious nature. Their impulse and strength were derived from a Mihira Bhoja or a Nāgabhata, a Rājarāja or a Rājendra, and not from the stabler source of the people. The universal clash of arms that we witnessed was not between people with any sense of territorial patriotism, nor even between followers of conflicting faiths, but always between the loyal or mercenary personal adherents of ambitious monarchs. To appreciate the real character of the period, therefore, we must turn from an account of the rulers to the people, society and culture of the time.

Two Moulding Forces : The people *en masse* never act except as they are led. Given effective leadership they are capable of achieving almost anything. This is no less true of democratic than monarchical countries ; no less true about modern than about ancient or medieval times. It is this universal human trait which accounts for the different levels and directions of the same people's achievement under varying circumstances. History abounds in illustrations of this eternal truth. Hence prophets and kings have always found large followings wherewith to found faiths and empires. If faiths and empires have not endured it is because leadership has been defective. In India it is these two forces, Religion and Rulers, that have always moulded the lives and fortunes of our people. We must therefore look deeper into the medieval religions and rulers of India. For the masses, indeed, the rulers were veritable gods on earth (राजा प्रत्यक्ष देवता) ; and what character the rulers bore also determined the character of the people themselves (यथा राजा तथा प्रजा). This is more true of India, perhaps, than of any other country ; more true of medieval India than of modern.

Religion : 'Religion' is a poor and misleading substitute for what Hindus call *Dharma.* The latter defined the outlook and sought to determine the conduct of every man, woman and child in India during the entire span of human life. It was in accordance with this mysterious urge that kings conducted campaigns, built temples, and patronised the Brāhmaṇs ; it was also to satisfy this instinct of *dharma* that women committed *satī* in times of peace and *johār* in times of war. Without an appreciation of this deep-seated and all-embracing element one can never grasp the meaning of medieval life which was different in outlook from our own. There were good kings and bad, just as there were differences in creed, dogma and ritual in different parts of the country or even among different sec-

2

tions of the people living in a single province. But making allowance for all manner of variations from man to man and province to province, the outlook of Hindu India, from the days of Harsha to those of Sundara Pāndya, from Hiuen Tsiang to Marco Polo, was identical. "With deeds, thoughts and words living beings should do their duty. Harsha has declared that an unsurpassable (mode of) acquiring spiritual merit." So wrote Hiuen Tsiang in the middle of the seventh century. His picture of the great king of Kanauj was the pattern for the succeeding seven centuries. Despite its length, therefore, it is worth citation.

'Prabhākaravardhana was succeeded by his eldest son Rājyavardhana. But when the latter was murdered by Śaśāngka the wicked king of Karṇasuvarṇa in East India, a persecutor of Buddhism,...the statesmen of Kanauj, on the advice of their leading man Bāṇi (or Vāṇi), invited Harshavardhana, the younger brother of the murdered king, to become their sovereign.' Upon this the reluctant prince 'determined to take the advice of Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara ('the Beholding Lord'). An image of this Bodhisattva, which had made spiritual manifestations, stood in a grove of this district near the Ganges. To this he repaired ; and after due fasting and prayer, he stated his case to the Bodhisattva. An answer was graciously given which told the prince that it was his good *Karma* to become king, and that he should, accordingly, accept the offered sovereignty and then raise Buddhism from the ruin into which it had been brought by the king of Karṇasuvarṇa, and afterwards make himself a great kingdom. The Bodhisattva promised him secret help, but warned him not to occupy the actual throne, and not to use the title *Mahārāja*. Thereupon Harshavardhana became king of Kanauj with the title *Rājaputra* and the style *Śīlāditya* (the Sun of Conduct).'

Starting with this motive, the way Harsha fulfilled his ideal is also characteristic of medieval Hindu kingship : 'As soon as Śīlāditya became ruler, he got together a great army and set out to avenge his brother's murder and to reduce the neighbouring countries to subjection. Proceeding eastwards he invaded the states which had refused allegiance ; and waged incessant warfare until in six years he had fought the Five Indias. Then having enlarged his territory he increased his army, bringing the elephant corps up to 60,000 and the cavalry 100,000, and reigned in peace for thirty years without raising a weapon. He was just in his administration, and punctilious in the discharge of his duties. He forgot sleep and food in his devotion to good works. He caused the use of animal food to cease throughout the Five Indias, and he prohibited the taking of life under severe penalties. He erected thousands of *topes* on the banks of the Ganges, established Travellers' Rests through all his dominions, and erected Buddhist monasteries at sacred places of the Buddhists. He regularly held the quinquennial convocation ; and gave away in religious alms everything

except the material of war. Once a year he summoned all the Buddhist monks together, and for twenty-one days supplied them with the regulation requisites. He furnished the chapels and liberally adorned the common halls of the monasteries. He brought the brethren together for examination and discussion, giving rewards and punishments according to merit and demerit. Those brethren who kept the rules of their order strictly and were thoroughly sound in theory and practice he advanced to the 'Lion's Throne' (i.e., promoted to the highest place) and from these he received religious instruction ; those who, though perfect in the observance of the ceremonial code, were not learned in the past, he merely honoured with formal reverence ; those who neglected the ceremonial observances of the order, and whose immoral conduct was notorious, were banished from his presence and from the country. The neighbouring princes, and the statesmen, who were zealous in good works, and unwearied in the search for normal excellence, he led to his own seat, and called them 'good friends,' and he would not converse with those of a different character. The king also made visits of inspection throughout his dominions, not residing long at any place but having temporary buildings erected for his residence at each place of sojourn, and he did not go abroad during the three months of the rainy-season retreat. At the royal lodges every day viands were provided for 1000 Buddhist monks and 500 Brāhmaṇs. The King's day was divided into three periods, of which one was given up to affairs of government and two were devoted to religous works. He was indefatigable, and the day was too short for him.'

This picture of a medieval monarch at his best is hard to surpass. Authentic as it is it must serve to give the reader a definite idea of what the better type of ruler in medieval India aimed at and did. Buddhism and Jainism were declining faiths. Other rulers might have subscribed to one or other of the new creeds of Hinduism which were welling up. But the general attitude was that of Harsha. Persecution of the followers of faiths other than one's own was rare. As a rule we find toleration the prevailing attitude. Hence Buddhists Jainas, Śaivites, Vishnavites, Pāshupatas, Jangamas, Tāntrics, Sun-worshippers, monists, dualists, qualified-dualists, and even heretics and non-believers—all lived in the country without communal clashes. There were often very passionate and heated disputations about spiritual matters and grave challenges by religious preachers and protagonists. But these were more or less of an academic character and rarely went beyond creating a temporary and local sensation. Perhaps occasionally a ruler would become a convert, but he did not seek to convert all his subjects. Patronage was continued on cosmopolitan lines, and *cujus regio ejus religio* was never adopted as a principle by Hindu rulers in medieval times.

The history of religious toleration in pre-Muslim India would make an interesting and instructive study. But it would be too much of a digression to undertake in this context. Like Harsha almost all great rulers of medieval India used to convene parliaments of religions under official auspices. Whatever their personal inclination, kings played the part of impartial judges and patrons of all. Minorities, especially, were accorded an almost paternal treatment. For instance, an inscription of Bukkarāya I of Vijayanagara dated c. 1368 A.D. records an interesting settlement of a dispute between his Vaishnava and Jaina subjects in the following terms :—

'The king taking the hand of the Jainas and placing it in the hand of the Sri Vaishnavas of the eighteen *nādus*, including the *āchāryas* of the places, declared that there was no difference between the *Vaishnava-darśana* and the *Jainadarśana*... If loss or advancement should be caused to the *Jaina-darśana* through the *Bhaktas*, the Vaishnavas will kindly see that it is loss or advancement to their own *darśana*. The Sri Vaishnavas will kindly to this effect set up a *śāsana* in all the *bastis* of the kingdom. For so long as the sun and moon endure the Vaishnavas will continue to protect the *Jaina-darśana*. The Vaishnavas and Jainas are one body : they must not be viewed as different.'

Space does not permit our recounting the fuller religious history of the times. But we must not fail to draw at least a brief sketch delineating its main features. Though the decline of Buddhism had commenced even when Hiuen Tsiang visited, that religion found votaries in Bihar and Bengal up to the days of the Pālas and Senas. The great Buddhist academy of Vikramasila, with its 107 temples and six colleges, was the creation of Dharmapāla (770-815 A.D.). When Bihar and Bengal were invaded by the Muslims towards the close of twelfth century (1197-99 A.D.) the last surviving followers of that fugitive faith were extinguished with the wholesale destruction of their monasteries.

Jainism survived during a longer period, especially in South India. It found patrons in all the principal dynasties of the South. It flourished in the dominions of the Rāshtrakūtas, Chālukyas, Gangas and Hoysalas, until the rise of Vaishnavism and Śaivism, in the days of Vishnuvardhana Hoysala (1100-41 A. D.) and Bijjala Kālachuri (1156-67 A.D.) respectively. Even then it did not completely lose its ground and claims followers in all parts of the peninsula to this day. Kumārapāla of Gujarat (1147-73 A. D.) was its great patron in western India.

Kumārila Bhatta (c. 700 A.D.), Śankarāchārya (c. 800 A.D.), Rāmānujachārya (c. 1100 A.D.), Basaveshwara (c. 1150 A.D.) and Mādhavāchārya (c. 1200 A.D.) were the outstanding religious teachers who were responsible for re-forming the spiritual outlook of Hindu society during the age immediately preceding the Muslim conquest of India. The effect of their teaching cannot be ignored by the historian who attempts to gauge the psychology of the people who were soon to be subjected to the test of a new revolutionary force (viz., Islam). The three great āchāryas and Kumārila and Basava, no doubt, revived Hinduism as a potent faith, but their philosophy bore the deep marks of the faiths they claimed to have destroyed.

The two most noteworthy features of this revived medieval Hinduism were the illusionism (*māyāvāda*) of Śankarāchārya and the *Bhakti* cult of other teachers. The former served only to confirm more deeply the spirit of other-worldliness inculcated by both the Buddhists and the Jainas ; the latter engendered an all-confiding belief in sectarianism which, while it divided the people, also expressed itself in a kind of idolatry that soon invited the cupidity of the iconoclastic invaders.

Architecture : While religion fostered king-worship, meekness, self-denial, renunciation, and a host of other virtues admired during times of peace and prosperity, it also gave a great impetus to artistic expression of all kinds. More than through other forms medieval Hinduism expressed itself luxuriantly in temple architecture. The Mārtānd Sun temple of Kashmir, the Khajurāho Vishnu temple of Central India, the rich Jaina temples of Mt. Ābu, and the famous Śaiva and Vaishnava temples of South India, particularly those built by the Cholas of Tanjore, the Pāndyas of Madura and the Hoysalas of Dwārasamudra (Halébīd and Belūr in Mysore), may be cited as examples. Mahmūd of Ghazni who destroyed the glorious temple of Somnāth was struck with a sense of beauty by the shrines of Mathura and Kanauj though his zeal for Islam did not permit his sparing them through admiration. The Kailāsa temple of Ellura, excavated under Krishna I Rāshtrakūta still evokes the admiration of the world. Princes and peasants had lavished their best gifts on these creations for generations before their fatal endowments attracted the heavy hammers of the greedy iconoclasts. Little did pious and self-complacent India of a thousand years ago dream that its princes and gods would alike prove impotent against a race of more

realistic foreigners. When one reads today the extravagant terms in which the medieval kings were eulogised by courtier-poets, and in which extravaganza royalty itself indulged, one cannot help exclaiming with the psalmist, " Vanity of vanities, all is vanity ! " The following extract, taken at random, from the records of Vishnuvardhana Hoysala (1100-41 A.D.), who, by the way, was only a viceroy under Chālukya Vikramāditya VI, may be taken as a sample of royal modesty compared with other effusions of the age.

' When the great Kshatriya, entitled to the five drums *mahāmandaleshwara* (with numerous other titles), a Bhairava of the last deluge to the Chola race, a royal lion to the elephant Chera, a submarine fire to the ocean Pāndya, a wild fire to the sprouts of the creeper the fame of Pallava, a *śarabha* to the lion Narasimhavarma, his unshaken fame a lamp into which Kālapāla and other kings fall like winged white-ants, the twang of his bow putting to flight the deer the Vanga, Anga, Kalinga, and Simhala kings, Kānchipura resounding with his orders as with the sharp sounds of drums. . . . the wives of hostile kings employed in his house as female servants, squeezing in his hand the southern Madhurāpura, having destroyed Jananāthapura by his general,—the Kānchi-gonda Vikrama-Ganga Vīra-Vishnuvardhana-deva, protecting under his sole umbrella the Gangavādi 96,000, the Nolambavādi 32,000 and the Banavāsi 12,000, was ruling the kingdom in peace and wisdom.'

Literature : There is one aspect of this poetic license, however, which we must not fail to appreciate. It is the literary mode. Hyperbole is the normal trait of Eastern literature. The tropical luxuriance of Nature must partially account for the wealth of imagination often running riot in our prose no less than poetical works. The break up of imperial India into petty provincial kingdoms narrowed down the range of appreciation. The imperial extravagance of language came to be lavished on the miniature emperors and their diminutive empires. But, at the same time, the shrinkage of empires into kingdoms multiplied the number of patrons and brought them into closer touch with the creative artists. It must also be remembered to the credit of our medieval Hindu rulers that many of them were, not merely familiar with their swords, but equally conversant with the creative pen. Even here Harsha stands as a model. The conqueror of ' the five Indias ' was also the author of *Ratnāvali, Nāgānanda, Priyadarśika,* etc., besides being a patron of literary men like Bāṇa the author of *Harshacharita, Kādambari,* etc. We have numerous examples of such a combination of martial vigour and literary taste throughout medieval India. To name only a few : Bhoja Paramāra

of Mālwa, Durvinīta Ganga of Mysore, Amoghavarsha Rāshtrakūta of Malkhed, Mahendravarma I Pallava of Kānchi, were all poet-kings ; while the number of those who patronised great writers was legion. Besides the capitals of all the kingdoms and the temples scattered throughout the land, Nālanda, Vikramasila, Benares, Ujjain, and Kānchi were some of the most celebrated centres of learning. Leaving out of our account works of pure literary interest like those of Rājashekhara, Bhavabhuti, Māgha, and Śri Harsha, and those of philosophic or religious interest like those of Śankarāchārya and Jayadeva, still we have works produced during this period which are of historical value and social importance like *Navasāhasānkacharita* of Padmagupta, *Vikramānkadevacharita* of Bilhaṇa, the *Rājatarangiṇi* of Kalhaṇa, besides the *Mudrārākshasa* of Vishākadutta and the *Mitākshara* of Vijnāneshwara. Of a scientific character we have the astromical and mathematical treatises of Bhāskarāchārya, viz. the *Siddhānta-shiromaṇi, Līlāvati* and *Bījagaṇita,* and the *Rājamārtānda* of Bhojarāja ; and medical and chemical treatises like the *Rasārṇava, Rasahridaya, Rasendrachūdāmaṇi,* etc. To add to this vast and varied literature in the classical tongue, vernacular works like the *Chānd-rāisa* and a host of others in Hindi, Bengali, Marāthi, Kanarese, Tamil, etc. would take us beyond the scope of our present study.

Imperium in Imperio : We observed at the commencement how Hindu India on the eve of the Muslim invasions was politically vulnerable but culturally all but impregnable. The sketch of political history given above, with its never-ending inter-state wars, must have amply demonstrated the truth of the first remark, namely, that India was internally too much divided and torn up with strife to be able to make a united stand against the foreigner. She did not even appear to have this desire. Politically speaking it is not, therefore, permissible to attribute this singular personal pronoun to the multiplicity of warring kingdoms that comprised the geographical entity India. Was India culturally impregnable ? Though she was politically much divided there is no doubt she had a cultural integrity. From the Himalayas to Cape Comorin there was a unity of civilization that bore the Hindu stamp, leaving ample scope for all individual and provincial variations. To delineate its character adequately would take more than the full extent of this treatise. But what has been already stated about the Religion, Rulers, Architecture and Literature of the age might serve to give an idea of what constituted Hindu India

even during the period of her decline. These features were common to the whole country and refused to collapse with the disintegration of her outward political structure. True to her mystic philosophical conception, of the Eternal Substance enduring behind the Passing Show of innumerable forms, the substance of her national character persisted in spite of the repeated disruption of her empires and kingdoms. What could account for this strange paradoxical phenomenon?

There was an *imperium in imperio,* a state within a state, that took care of the people and their culture in the midst of invading armies that swept the length and breadth of the land playing ducks and drakes with its princes and principalities. Its rigid vocational caste-system, for the most part, made warfare a game of professionals from which all but the warrior class were religiously excluded. Until at least the advent of Islam the Hindu code of chivalry, which respected the sanctity of non-combatants, was very largely observed in all parts of India, though occasionally we have transgressions like the one recorded in a South Indian inscription (of Satyāshraya at Hottur) which alleges that the Chola army (1007-8 A.D.) 'pillaged the country, slaughtered women, children and Brāhmaṇs, and taking the girls to wife, destroyed their caste.' From the days of Megasthenes to those of the Muhammadans the immunity of the village communities from pillage and destruction in times of war was an established fact. Such dangers to which the villagers were exposed came from robbers and cattle-raiders. Except where anarchy reigned, normally, society was protected by its autonomous institutions which were too deep-rooted to be disturbed by even the chronic instability of kingdoms of the Middle Age. The secret of the preservation of Hindu civilization is therefore to be found in her enduring social structure.

The rigidity of the caste-system is often referred to as one of the causes of our decline. By no means a defensible institution, under modern conditions, it nevertheless made its own contribution to our cultural survival. Fortresses were taken, capitals changed their masters, kingdoms rose and fell, but Hindu society was hardly affected. This inviolability of its main character has been due to two institutions, viz., Caste and the Village Community.

India was, as it were, covered by innumerable circles, some of them concentric and some intersecting. The circle of the village community stood within the larger circle of the kingdom and enclosed

within itself the circles of the various castes. These last were mutually exclusive within the village, but intersected both the circle of the village and the larger circle of the kingdom, being linked up with members of the same caste outside the village and the kingdom. The net-work of castes and villages sustained its balance and remained intact even when the larger circle of the kingdom was broken into or destroyed. The kingdoms were the variables, and villages and castes the constant factors in the Hindu socio-political equation. The mutual exclusiveness of the castes was confined only to inter-marriage and in some cases also to inter-dining. In all other spheres they co-operated and lived an inter-dependent life. Even the lowest of the low had his place defined in the community and each ran his course in the pre-ordained orbit. Rulers of kingdoms passed through varying vicissitudes of fortune but the even tenor of village life was hardly disturbed.

Since the village communities were the repositories and nurseries of our Hindu civilization, it is necessary that we should have a glimpse of their working during the period of our survey. In brief, they were autonomous groups with minimum of dependence upon the central government. Where the latter was benevolent and strong the village community had everything to gain by way of patronage. Where that authority was either weak or indifferent the village had little to fear and little to lose. There was however one other contingency : the king might be both strong and oppressive. There were such wicked rulers as Śankaravarma and Harsha of Kashmir. But they were exceptions and brought about their own downfall.

External defence to the extent it was needed was provided by the king. Internal policing was done by the villagers themselves. There were officers formally appointed by the village Council and paid from the local revenue, taxes being levied for various purposes such as defence, education, sanitation, construction of roads, aqueducts, wells, tanks, temples, etc. Under normal conditions they were munificently endowed by their rulers. We have evidence from inscriptions commemorating the high sense of duty with which villagers in all parts of the country participated in their public responsibilities. To die fighting for the defence of the village was considered a great honour ; we have hero-stones scattered throughout the country bearing testimony to this. To build or endow a temple or contribute towards the creation or maintenance of public

utilities was regarded as a means of earning spiritual merit (पुण्य):

वापीकूपतडागानि देवतायतनानि च ।
पतितान्युद्धरेद्यस्तु स पूर्तफलमश्नुते ॥

Though such village communities existed in all parts of India, they seem to have been most systematically organized in South India. It is interesting to note that, not only were the various administrative functions distributed among several bodies under the supervision of an elective village *sabha,* but the qualifications of eligible officers were carefully defined and rules laid down for their conduct. For instance, each holder of a share in a Brāhmaṇ village called an *Agrahāra* had a right to a seat in the *sabha.* But he was required to be well versed in the *Dharmaśāstras* and to have a permanent and abiding interest in the village and to be also sound in body and mind. The minimum qualification required for membership, the method of election and the formation of committees in the *sabha* were all defined. Enlightened rulers by their own munificent endowments to educational institutions made it possible for such village republics to function properly. Professor A. S. Altekar has, among other examples, cited the following from an inscription of Krishna III (Rāshtrakūta), dated 945 A.D.

> " The college (at Salgoti) was located in a magnificent building built by Nārāyaṇa, a minister of Krishna III. Students from distant countries resorted to it and twenty-seven hostels were necessary to accommodate them. Boarding and lodging was free, 500 acres of land being endowed by the king for meeting those expenses. The provision for the light charges of this big academy was made by another grant of 12 acres ; and the principal was assigned 50 acres by way of remuneration. The inhabitants of the village too were not slow to appreciate the institution ; the institute used to receive from them five coins at the time of each marriage, two and a half at the time of each thread ceremony and one and a quarter at the time of each tonsure. Besides, whenever a feast was given in the village, the host used to entertain as many teachers and students as he could afford to entertain."

SOME RELEVANT DATES

A.D.

570 Birth of the Prophet Muhammad.

622 Hegira (Muhammad's flight from Mecca to Medina) or commencement of the Muslim Era.

629 Muhammad's return to Mecca ; Hiuen Tsiang started for India.

632 Death of Muhammad ; Abu Bekr first Caliph.

A.D.	
634	Omar second Caliph.
636	Syria conquered by Muslims.
637	Battle of Kadessia ; Persian Empire overthrown.
638	Jarusalem taken by Caliph Omar.
642	Death of Chālukya Pulakesin II.
644	Othman third Caliph.
645	Hiuen Tsiang's return from India.
647	Death of Harsha King of Kanauj.
656	Murder of Caliph Othman at Medina ; Āli fourth Caliph.
661	Āli murdered ; Muawija first Omayid Caliph.
711	Muslim invasion of Spain.
712	Arab invasion of Sind.
732	Charles Martel hammers Muslims out of France.
749-50	Omayids overthrown at Damascus by Abul Abbas first Abbasid Caliph (*Shiah*).
786-809	Harun Al-Rashid the Great Caliph at Bagdad.

CHAPTER II

THE CRESCENT ON THE HORIZON

The Rise of Islam :

In contrast to the political weakness of India that we traced in the preceding pages we have here to witness the rise of a mighty power in the West. That power was Islam, the militant faith founded in Arabia by its Prophet Muhammad (570-632 A.D.) in the first quarter of the seventh century, but destined before a hundred years were past to extend over Asia Minor, North Africa, and the Iberian peninsula, in the west ; and Arabia, Persia, Afghanistan, and Turkistan, in the east. This mighty crescent lying over the western, southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean, possessed such dynamic energy that it seemed only a question of time when it would spread into the other neighbouring countries. Its surging tide was stemmed in Europe at two points : (1) at the battle of Tours (Poitiers) in southern France in 732 A. D. and (2) at Constantinople on the Bosporus in 717 A.D. Nevertheless, it encompassed in its triumphant march the ruin of two mighty empires—Byzantine and Sassanid—and spread its green mantle over the Semitic, Hamitic, Negro, Iberian, Caucasian, Iranian and Turanian peoples. In the words of the great historian Gibbon, "At the close of the first century of the Hegira (622-722 A. D.) the caliphs (Muhammad's apostolic successors) were the most potent and absolute monarchs of the globe." Though their theocratic empire was soon divided between three rival courts (at Bagdad on the Tigris, Cairo on the Nile, and Cordova on the Guadalquivir), Mecca continued to be its spiritual heart, its perennial fountain of inspiration. Two races determined the character of this colossal movement, viz. the Arabs (Semitic) and the Turks (Turanian). The former shaped its culture and the latter gave it its ruthlessness and energy. In course of time, the other elements in its composite people also began to impart their own characteristics to Islamic civilization. We shall examine the nature of this new force in humanity at a later

stage. Here we must confine ourselves to its outward expansion towards India.

From Damascus to Bagdad :

Of the three countries of Islamic power mentioned above, viz. Bagdad, Cairo and Cordova, only the first is relevant to our history. The Caliphate of Bagdad had its immediate predecessor in that of Damascus. Muhammad, the Prophet, had been succeeded by his father-in-law Abu Bekr ; he was the first Caliph. His successor, Caliph Omar (634-44 A.D.), made most of the conquests of Islam, viz., in Syria, Egypt and Persia. As the empire of the Caliphs expanded, their capital was moved from Medina to Damascus. For nearly a hundred years under the Omayids, as the successors of Omar were called, Damascus reigned over the Islamic world. It was during the reign of the Omayid Caliph Walid I (705-14 A. D.) that the Arab invasion of Sind (711 A.D.) took place. At the same time, Muslim arms were carried northwards to the borders of China. But the Caliphate of Damascus soon fell a prey to the evils bred by luxury and autocracy. In 750 A. D. their rivals, the Abbasids, brought about a revolution. The last of the Omayids was hunted down and killed in Egypt. The maker of this revolution, Abul Abbas, became the founder of the new line of Caliphs. In the words of H. G. Wells, Abbas " began his reign by collecting into one prison every living male of the Omayyad line upon whom he could lay hands and causing them all to be massacred. Their bodies, it is said, were heaped together, a leathern carpet was spread over them, and on this gruesome table Abbas and his councillors feasted. Moreover the tombs of the Omayyad Caliphs were rifled, and their bones burnt and scattered to the four winds." After this the Abbasids changed their capital from Damascus to Bagdad (762 A.D.).

The motive for the above *coup de main* was the traditional feud between the *Shiahs* and the *Sunnis*. The Omayids were *Sunnis* and the Abbasids *Shiahs*. Briefly, the conflict had arisen between two rival parties in the apostolic succession commencing with Āli the fourth Caliph. The first three Caliphs held their position through the people's choice. Āli being the Prophet's son-in-law (by his marriage with Muhammad's daughter Fatimah), the Shiahs recognised him and his lineal descendants as the only true Caliphs. The Sunnis recognized the first three elected Caliphs as well. The flag of the

Sunnis is white ; that of the Shias is black. The Abbasid Caliphate of Bagdad became famous under Al-Manṣur (754-75 A. D.) and Harun-al-Rashid (786-809 A. D.) of *Arabian Nights* fame. Bagdad under them became a renowned centre of learning, art and science. But in the eleventh century it fell into the hands of the Seljuk Turks and in the thirteenth was destroyed by the Mongols.

On the Indian Horizon :

The Arabs were the carriers of Indian trade with the West for centuries before they became Muslims. It is, therefore, to be expected that their conversion would not be without effect upon India. They appear to have led their first expedition to Thāṇā (near Bombay) on the west coast as early as 636-7 A. D. But it was not much of a success. The next attempt was made in 644 A. D. by land through the Mekran coast into western Sind. It was sent by Caliph Othman as a reconnoitring expedition, and its leader Hākim bin Jabala al-'Abdi reported, "Water is scarce, the fruits are poor, and the robbers are bold ; if a few troops are sent they will be slain, if many, they will starve." After this disheartening survey no further experiments appear to have been made until the Arabs were provoked in 711 A. D.

A party of Arabs was returning from the Malabar coast with gifts for Caliph Walid I at Damascus and his viceroy Hajjaj at Basrah. It was plundered by pirates near the mouth of the Indus and the Arabs were detained at the port of Debal (Karachi). A demand for their restitution was made to the ruler of Sind, but it was met with evasion. Hence a punitive expedition was at once despatched by Hajjaj, but it failed. Another was sent in its wake with no better results. Finally, in the autumn of 711 A.D., the enraged governor of Irāk despatched his own nephew and son-in-law, Imād-ud-dīn Muhammad bin Kāsim, with a mightier force consisting of 6000 Syrian horse, an equal number of Irāki camels, and 3000 Bactrian baggage animals. Imād-ud-dīn was a youth of seventeen summers, but his success showed that he was a brilliant commander.

The Fall of Brāhmaṇābād :

It will be remembered that Sind was at this time under a Brāhmaṇ ruler of the Chach dynasty which had come into power by the overthrow of Rāi Sāhasi only a generation earlier. The rapidity with which Sind was conquered by Imād-ud-dīn Muhammad, as we shall

presently see, seems quite natural in the light of the internal weakness of the country. On the showing of the *Chach-nāmā*, there was not much love lost between the rulers and the ruled in Sind at this time. The Brāhmaṇs were not merely usupers but also ruled like usurpers. The basic population was mostly Buddhist by religion and Jat by race. The Chach family was therefore alien both in race and religion ; what made matters worse was that it was also alien in spirit.

Chacha, the founder of the dynasty, was only a minister of Sāhasi. On the latter's death he usurped the throne and married the widowed queen. This was evidently not liked by the subjects. But the Brāhmaṇ adventurer ruled them with an iron hand. The Jats were forbidden to carry arms, ride saddled horses, wear silks, and subjected to other humiliations. They were to walk always bare headed and bare footed and carry with them dogs to indicate their presence. Chacha soon made himself master over all the surrounding country. The petty rājas and chieftains were all subdued. He also tried to cultivate relations with established ruling families by marrying his daughter to a prince of Kashmir.

Chacha's successor was his brother Chandra, after whom came Dahir (Chacha's son) who ruled when the Arabs invaded. Even then the usurpers had not been well established. Discontent among the subjects was rendered worse by domestic dissension in the Chach family. This was the unhappy state of the ill-assorted kingdom of Sind when it was faced with the crisis brought on by Dahir's tactlessness in dealing with the legitimate grievance of the Arabs. The invaders were further assisted by an Arab contingent which appears to have been already in Dahir's service, but refused to fight against their own co-religionists. In contrast to this, Dahir's own countrymen, the discontented Jats, made common cause with the enemy to overthrow the oppressor.

We need not be at pains over the details of the conquest. The port of Debal was the first to be attacked. Imād-ud-dīn Muhammad had reinforcements from the governor of Mekran, Muhammad Hārūn, who brought with him five catapults which served for medieval artillery. The temple stronghold of Debal was soon reduced and its sacred flag brought down. "700 beautiful females under the protection of Buddha" were among the prizes won by Imād-ud-dīn. The male population above the age of seventeen, having refused to be circumcised, were put to the sword ; the rest were enslaved. A

mosque took the place of the demolished temple.

One of the first dispatches of Imād-ud-dīn to his uncle Hajjaj, according to the *Chach-nāmā*, reads : " The nephew of Raja Dahir, his warriors and principal officers have been dispatched, and the infidels converted to Islam or destroyed. Instead of idol-temples, mosques and other places of worship have been erected. *Khutbah* (Friday prayer) is read, the call to prayer is raised, so that devotions are performed at stated hours. The *takbir* and praise to the Almighty God are offered every morning and evening."

In acknowledging this, Hajjaj wrote back : " God says, 'Give no quarter to infidels, but cut their throats.' Then know that this is the command of the great God. You should not be too ready to grant protection, because it will prolong your work. After this give no quarter to any enemy except those who are of rank."

The Buddhist samani (*śramaṇas*) of Nerun and Sehwan, the next to feel the weight of Arab arms, escaped destruction through abject surrender. These fortified towns were betrayed by the casuistry of the samani who seem to have argued, " We are a priestly class ; our religion is peace. According to our faith, fighting and slaughter are not allowable." So they advised surrender.

The work of the invaders being thus facilitated, they turned to Rāwār and Brāhmaṇābād, where the Arabs met with the most determined resistance. At the former place, however, a calamity familiar in Indian warfare put the army into fright : Dahir seated on an elephant was carried against his will into the river Indus by the frightened animal. Though the king saved himself and continued to fight mounting a horse, the army thought its leader lost. At Brāhmaṇābād, which was bravely defended by Dahir's son Jai Singh, the struggle was likewise cut short by the betrayal of one of the Sindi generals. The conquest of Aror, Multan and other places followed (713 A. D.).

One relieving feature in this sorry tale was the valiant though unavailing stand made by the women, under the leadership of Rāṇi Bāi. They resisted bravely when their husbands died, and finally, in Rajput fashion, committed *johār* in their thousands. Two beautiful daughters of Dahir, it is related, had been sent to the Caliph through Hajjaj among the choicest first gifts by Imād-ud-dīn. They avenged themselves on their captor by inciting the enraptured Hajjaj (or Caliph) to pass a fatal sentence on Imād-ud-dīn on a charge of initial rape. Whatever be the causes that led to the ungrateful execu-

tion of the young Arab general it is true that he met a tragic end. What is of far greater interest to us, however, is the state to which Sind was reduced by this first triumph of the Crescent in India, and its consequences on subsequent history.

Political Aspects of the Arab Episode :

Though Sind continued to be always under the Muslims until its annexation to the Delhi empire, scholars have repeatedly denied the lasting character of the Arab conquest. Tod, the renowned historian of Rājasthān, put forward an exaggerated claim which has been emphatically repudiated by *The Cambridge History of India* (following Lane-Poole) in these terms :—

" Of the Arab conquest of Sind there is nothing more to be said. It was a mere episode in the history of India and affected only a small portion of the fringe of that vast country. It introduced into one frontier tract the religion which was destined to dominate the greater part of India for nearly five centuries, but it had none of the far-reaching effects attributed to it by Tod in the *Annals of Rājasthān.* Muhammad b. Qāsim never penetrated to Chitor in the heart of Rajputāna ; the Caliph Walid I did not 'render tributary all that part of India on this side the Ganges' ; the invader was never 'on the eve of carrying the war against Raja Harchund of Kanauj,' much less did he actually prosecute it ;......nor was the whole of northern India, as Tod maintains, convulsed by the invasion of the Arabs. One of these, as we have seen, advanced to Adhoi in Cutch, but no settlement was made, and the expedition was a mere raid ; and though the first news of the irruption may have suggested warlike preparations to the princes of Rājasthān their uneasiness cannot have endured. The tide of Islam, having overflowed Sind and the lower Punjab ebbed, leaving some jetsam on the strand. The rulers of states beyond the desert had no cause for alarm. That was to come later, and the enemy was to be, not the Arab, but the Turk who was to present the faith of the Arabian prophet in a more terrible guise than it had when presented by native Arabians."

Without contesting the main thesis of Sir Wolseley Haig, and without subscribing to Col. Tod's either, it is necessary for us to assess the positive aspects of the wide implications of the Arab conquest. Here we need take into consideration only *what was actually done* by Imād-ud-dīn Muhammad and his successors and not what the intrepid Imād *might have done* had he not met with his tragic fate.

Imād-ud-dīn's sudden removal from the scene did indeed cut short a career that had made a promising beginning for Islam in India. The Caliph Walid I, under whom this episode took place,

also died in 715 A.D. Under his son Umar II (717 A.D.) Jai Singh, the son of Dahir who had fought so valiantly against the Arabs only five years earlier, became a convert to Islam. But even his conversion did not save him. Junaid, the governor of Sind under Caliph Hishām (724-43 A.D.) invaded his territory and killed him. Then followed the Abbasid revolution at Damascus (750 A. D.) and the creation of the new Caliphate of Bagdad. Sind was not immune to its repercussions. Already the grip of the Caliphs had loosened under the later Omayids. The governors and chiefs of Sind proved themselves more and more recalcitrant. By 871 A. D. the authority of the Caliphs in Sind was virtually extinguished, and Arab chiefs finally established two independent principalities : one in Mansūrah or Sind proper, up to Aror on the Indus, and the other comprising modern Multan. The allegiance to the Caliphate that the successors of these chiefs protested to Mahmūd Ghazni during his raids in the tenth century was merely a diplomatic pretence.

Arab Administration :

Three years (711-13 A.D.) were too short a period in which to create anything like an Arab administrative system in Sind. They were also years of continuous fighting. Nevertheless, Imād-ud-dīn established a sort of rough and ready machinery wherewith to replace the system that was destroyed, and also as a means of securing the fruits of the conquest. It must be remembered that he had brought with him but 15,000 men and might have received reinforcements of about 5000 more. At the end of the three years (711-13 A. D.) perhaps not more than half the number were left, soldiers and camp-followers included, after paying the toll of war and sickness. Besides, they had brought no women with them ; at least not in sufficient numbers. Hence such arrangements as Imād-ud-dīn could make were bound to be in the nature of a compromise.

In the first flush of victory at Debal he had acted quite like a Muslim conqueror in an infidel country. The law of Islam was unambiguous in this respect. Apart from the followers of the True Faith, there were only two classes of people : (1) those who were sharers in Revelation, like the Hebrews and the Christians, and (2) those who were intolerable infidels and idolaters. The former could be suffered to practise their own religions provided *jizya* was exacted from them. But the choice for the latter could only be between con-

version to Islam and death. Hajjaj under whose orders Imād-ud-dīn was acting was a stern and uncompromising bigot. Naturally, there was here no room for compromise. Hence the vanquished at Debal were given the customary choice, and on their refusal, according to Ferishta, those of seventeen years of age and above were put to the sword and the rest were enslaved. The women and treasures, such as fell into the conqueror's hands, were appropriated. Islamic tradition demanded their being shared among the faithful. A fifth was sent to the Caliph through Hajjaj and the remainder distributed among the soldiery. Out of the limited troops at the commander's disposal, 4000 had to be spared for the retention of Debal, while war was carried into the enemy's country with the remnant of the army. Here were natives ready to help the invader, but they could not all be forcibly converted and yet expected to serve. Under these unique circumstances the practical wisdom of Imād-ud-dīn prevailed. The infidels had to be at least partially tolerated. The privileges of the Zimmi (Hebrews and Christians) were extended to the Hindus and Buddhists of Sind. Similar concession had been shown elsewhere to the Zoroastrians and the Māgi, and the exigencies of the situation in Sind at least made its adoption seem justifiable. In the opinion of Sir William Muir *the conquest of Sind therefore marks a new stage in Muslim policy.*

Enslavement of those who were captured in war and the building of mosques on the ruins of temples demolished was carried out up to a stage. Then the conqueror discovered that the way of conciliation and compromise was more paying, if Sind was to be at all permanently secured. The infidels were taken into both civil and military employ, their women were taken to wife, lands were restored to some of the native chieftains without the obligation to become converts, idolatry was connived at, even some of the four-armed idols already appropriated, instead of being destroyed, were despatched to Hajjaj as curios along with other gifts. Especially, in the organisation of the revenue administration did Imād-ud-dīn find the Hindus indispensable. The new policy was proclaimed in the following terms : " The temples shall be inviolate like the churches of the Christians, the synods of the Jews, and the altars of the Magians—subject to the *jizya* and other taxes."

Sir Wolseley Haig speaks of Hajjaj as " a bitter persecutor " who " knew nothing of the lax interpretation which tolerated idolatry on

payment of a tribute." But even Hajjaj appears to have relented, if the *Chach-nāmā* is to be believed. In reply to the appeal for toleration made by the people of Brāhmaṇābād, which was referred to him by Imād-ud-dīn, Hajjaj declared, " As they have made submission and have agreed to pay taxes to the Caliph, nothing more can be properly required from them. They have been taken under our protection and we cannot, in any way, stretch our hands upon their lives or property. Permission is given them to worship their gods. Nobody must be forbidden or prevented from following his own religion. They may live in their houses in whatever manner they like." After this way was open for Imād-ud-dīn to say, " Deal honestly between the people and the Sultan, and if distribution is required, make it with equity, and fix the revenue according to the ability to pay. Be in concord among yourselves and oppose not each other, so that the country may not be distressed."

The booty which had come to the conqueror was by no means small. The ancient practice of hoarding, wearing costly jewellery, and lavishing gold and silver on temples, provided a splendid quarry. The *Chach-nāmā* records one instance where a temple yielded over thirteen hundred *maṇs* of gold. This was partly sent to the Commander of the Faithful and partly distributed. In another case 12 *dirhams* of silver were given to each head of the entire population as compensation for property looted. Nevertheless the taxation was fairly heavy, especially for the infidels. The annual revenue in the aggregate for Sind and Multan is said to have been 11,500,000 *dirhams* (£ 270,000).

First came the *jizya* which was levied according to three grades (1) 48 *dirhams*, (2) 24 *dirhams*, and (3) 12 *dirhams*. Evidently the distinction was made on the basis of the social status of persons and their capacity to pay. Women, children, and those unable to work, were exempted from the *jizya*. Then came the land tax (*khirāj*) which was also graded according to produce : (1) 2|5 of wheat and barley in lands watered by public canals ; and (2) 1|4 in others. In the case of garden produce like grapes and dates, 1|3 was the state demand, and 1|5 on fish, wine, pearls, etc. There were tax-free gifts of land made to the soldiery, but subject to military service and the payment of *sadgah* (religious alms). But all these burdens were liable to enhancement under more exacting circumstances. Indeed, as Elliot has pointed out, " With the progress of luxury the wants of government

and its servants increased, and their zeal diminished ; so that it became requisite to employ more people, and to give them higher pay. Consequently, the taxes were gradually increased, till the proprietors and working classes were unable to pay them, which led to continual changes in the government."

The Arab conquerors of Sind treated the natives much as the Spartans did the Messenians. They devoted themselves almost exclusively to the cultivation of arms while the helots worked for them in the fields. Nay worse ; while the Arabs in later years took more and more to trade and luxuries, the old humiliations which the Jats had suffered at the hands of their Chach kings,—viz. prohibition to ride, wear silk, head-gear and foot-wear, and obligation to carry dogs with them etc. continued. Hence, so far as the people were concerned, what the Arab conquest achieved was only a substitution of one kind of oppression for another. Perhaps, for the converts to the new faith, times had changed for the better ; to others for the worse.

Why Arabs Failed :

In the final analysis the Arab adventure in India must be accounted a failure : not because it achieved nothing, but because it "led to nothing," of course in the political sense. It is only in this and this sense only that Lane-Poole's verdict must be understood. It was indeed "an episode in the history of India and of Islam, a triumph without results." That is to say, the permanent conquest of India by Muslim arms had to be attempted afresh, from another quarter and by another people—Turks and not the Arabs. The Arabs who had conquered Syria, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Carthage, Spain and Portugal, Turkistan, Persia and Afghanistan prior to the conquest of Sind, cried halt at the threshold of India. Why ? The causes are certainly worthy of investigation. From the point of view of India, too, it was an "episode" "without results" because India never seemed to take heed despite the lesson of Sind. She was as unprepared and pre-occupied three centuries later, when the Iconoclast hammered her gods out of existence, as Sind had been when the first Muslim mosques were built on the ruins of Hindu and Buddhist temples.

But the activities of the Arabs in Sind were not so isolated as they have been usually supposed. The identity of places like Quinnauj and Odipur mentioned by Arab chroniclers might be disputed by scholars. Yet the following references are not of a negligible character :—

Cutch, as admitted by Sir Wolseley Haig, was raided by the Arabs in the eighth century A. D. though not with a view to annexation or settlement. " For the most part," *The Cambridge Shorter History of India* observes, " the Arab governors of Sind maintained friendly relations with the Maitrakas of Valabhi in Gujarat, and with the Chāvadās and Chālukyas who succeeded them." (p. 205). In another place (p. 123) the same history points out that " The Lāta Chālukya, Pulakesin, records his defeat of an Arab army which had reached his lands, and Nāgabhata, the founder of the Gurjara power, is recorded to have turned back a Mlechcha invader, perhaps the expedition of Junaid already mentioned. The Gurjaras certainly formed a bulwark against the Arab advance, and for this reason the Arabs cultivated the friendship of the rival clan of the Rāshtrakūtas of Mānyakheta (the Balhāras)." We have testimony of the inscriptions as well as the writings of Arab travellers of the ninth and tenth centuries to confirm these widespread Arabian contacts. Al-Masūdi (912-16 A.D.) attests to the power and prestige of the Gurjara-Pratihāras under Mihira Bhoja and his successor Mahipāla (840-940 A. D.), and refers to a Muslim settlement of over 20,000 people at Chaul. Sulaiman (851 A.D.) describes Amoghavarsha (815-78 A.D.), whom he calls Balhāra, as one of the four great princes of the world, the other three being the Caliph of Bagdad, and the Emperors of China and Roum (Constantinople). He also adds, " there does not exist among rulers, a prince who likes the Arabs more than Balhāra, and his subjects follow his example." Among the victories of Nāgabhata II (c. 800-25 A. D.) of the Gurjara family is mentioned one against the Turushkas (Arabs); and the Nausāri grants of 738 A.D. record the victory of Lāta Chālukya Pulakesin in Gujarat, already mentioned, though the Arab historian Balādhuri claims that the invaders conquered Jurz (Gurjara) and Barus (Broach), but were less successful against Uzain (Ujjain) and Maliba (Mālwā). " The power that checked the eastward advance of the Arabs," according to Sir Wolseley Haig, " was the Avanti dynasty of Rājputāna and western Mālwā, whose descendants were destined to play a great part in the history of northern India." To these we might add the testimony of the Muslim tradition regarding the Arab settlements on the Malabar coast referred to in the first chapter. Apart from the unverified statements of Zain-ud-dīn regarding the conversion of Cheramān Perumāl, during the life-time of the Prophet, we

would refer here to a more plausible tradition regarding the origin of the Navāits, Māplas and Labbais of South India. It is related by Thurston in his *Castes and Tribes of Southern India* (IV, 199), that the ancestors of these South Indian Musalmans were refugees from Irāk exiled by Hajjaj of Basrah, early in the eighth century A.D. But perhaps more convincing evidence is that of the tomb of one Āli ibn Udthormān bearing an epitaph dated 166 Hegira (788 A.D.) referred to by Mr. Innes in the *Malabar Gazetteer*. According to Nelson, the Muslims first established themselves in Madura in 1050 A. D. Thus it would appear that before the Turkish invasions began in the tenth and eleventh centuries, Indians in most parts of the country had come into varied contacts with the Arabs. It is not likely, therefore, that they could have remained ignorant of happenings in Sind during the period intervening between Imād-ud-dīn Muhammad bin Kāsim and Mahmūd Ghazni. If, in spite of this, Indian rulers encouraged the Arabs, it was either on account of political reasons, as in the case of the Rāshtrakūtas, or on the score of commercial advantages. For instance, according to Wassāf, from Fars alone 10,000 Arab horses were annually imported into India. They cost 2,200,000 *dinars*. As Mr. Titus observes in his *Indian Islam*, " The Arab traders enjoyed the favour of the Hindu rulers, whose states profited extensively from the mercantile relations thus established ; and as a result, no hindrances were put in the way of their proselytizing. In fact, the native converts are known to have been treated with the same respect and consideration as the foreigners, even though they may have been recruited from the lowest classes of society." Two instances may be here cited from Arab writers themselves in confirmation of the kind of treatment accorded to Musalmans by Hindu rulers : Irdrisi, in the eleventh century, noted that the Arab traders who frequented Anhilwārā in large numbers " are honourably received by the king and his ministers, and find protection and safety." M. Ufi records that, when the Muslims at Cambay were attacked by the Hindus, Siddh Rāj (1094-1143 A. D.) punished his own offending subjects and subsidised the Musalmans in building a mosque by way of compensation. It is all the more surprising, therefore, that the Arabs should have failed in spite of such a favourable congregation of circumstances.

Elphinstone attributed the impermanence of the Arab regime to three causes : (1) the expulsion of the Arabs by the Sumera Rajputs ;

(2) the existence in India of " a powerful priesthood, closely connected with government, and deeply revered by their countrymen ; and a religion interwoven with the laws and manners of the people, which exercised an irresistible influence over their very thoughts ; and (3) " even the divisions of the Hindus were in their favour : the downfall of one rāja only removed a rival from the prince who was next behind ; and the invader diminished his numbers, and got further from his resources, without being able to strike a blow which might bring his undertaking to a conclusion." In the opinion of Lane-Poole, " The more obvious explanation of the Arab's failure is found (4) in the as yet unbroken strength of the Rajput kings on the north and east, and (5) in the inadequate forces dispatched by the Caliphs for so formidable a project as the conquest of India... (6) The province was not only imperfectly subdued, (7) but extremely poor, and the Caliphs soon abandoned it in all but name as too unremunerative to be worth maintaining." To this catalogue of apparent causes on the Indian side must be added the more real causes that were sapping the vitality of Arabic Islam at its very root. At first came (8) the struggle for the Caliphate itself which resulted in the overthrow of the Omayids by the Abbasids. The work of conquest begun in India under the auspices of the former sustained a sudden shock of revolution almost in the same generation. Its reaction in India was seen in the wholesale supersession of officers of the old regime by the devotees of the new. (9) Then came the very destructive grandeur of the Commander of the Faithful under Harun-al-Rashid, when the Empire of the Caliphs " lost touch with everything original and vital in Islam ; " and " speculative philosophy and high-living " took the place of " Koranic orthodoxy and Arabian simplicity." "The solitary bond which could have held the empire together, sternness and plainness of the Moslem faith, was completely neglected by both the Caliph and his advisers " (Sir Mark Sykes, *The Caliph's Last Heritage,* cited by H. G. Wells). (10) After this the Islamic Brotherhood was rent by factions racial, religious and political, when a wave of nationalism was fast overtaking the world. The Arabic Caliphate soon fell before the Turks, and Karmatian and other heretics flocked to the Muslim Cave of Adullam, viz. Sind.

The Conquerors Conquered :

India to-day is the biggest Islamic country in the world. In the province of Bengal alone there are more Muslims than in Arabia, Tur-

key and Persia put together. Yet are these Muhammadans a minority in this country, there being four Hindus to every Musalman. This after at least a thousand years of determined Muslim rule (712-1712 A.D.) accompanied by incessant proselytizing activity spread over a longer period. It is a unique phenomenon in human history which cannot but challenge thought for explanation. In the face of this we cannot blame the Arabs for failure in their half-hearted experiment in Sind which escaped even their nominal control after 160 years (711-871 A.D.).

Even up to 871 A.D., when Sind virtually slipped out of the hands of the Caliph, it had not become an Arab province. We have noted to what extent the needs of the situation had softened the initial zeal of the conquerors. There were hardly any reinforcements of Arabs to create a permanent settlement. Such as remained were like islands in the sea. The true Arabs who had been placed in charge of the scattered fortifications in the country, were marooned among the infidels and soon became denationalised. They had not come to Sind as pioneers of civilization ; they were merely the sword-arm of a militant faith. There was hardly any culture in them. Hence they could destroy, but not build. The Arabs were intellectually and emotionally sharp, but excepting poetry they had no arts to speak of, not even the art of building up an enduring state. As Sir John Marshall has pointed out, " the Arabs themselves possessed little or no genius for the art of building, and, if their places of worship were to be as attractive as those of rival creeds it was indispensable that they should impress into their service the builders and artists of the newly conquered countries." That was how the so-called Saracenic architecture was evolved. From India, therefore, the Arabs took away more than the wealth they had taken in war. " It was India, not Greece," as Havell puts it, " that taught Islam in the impressionable years of its youth, formed its philosophy and esoteric religious ideals, and inspired its most characteristic expression in literature, art, and architecture." The cultural treasures of India that we briefly indicated in the first chapter were the richest plunder that the Arab invaders got. They laid their hands quite freely on these in all parts of India while they got the chance. Even in the decadent province of Sind there was sufficient to take the captor captive. In the opinion of Goldziher, the Buddhist monks from Sind (whom Jāhiz of c. 866 A.D.) calls *Zindig* monks) 'did not appear on

the Moslem horizon in any theoretical way alone.' As early as the days of the Abbasid Caliphate they 'were a factor of practical importance to the adherents of Islam, just as in earlier times the wandering Christian monks had attracted attention in Syria.' Secondly, Buddhist and other Indian works were rendered into Arabic, either directly from the Sanskrit or from Persian translations. During the Caliphate of Al-Mansur (745-75 A. D.), for example, the *Brahma Siddhānta* and *Khanda-Khādyaka* of Brahmagupta were translated from Sanskrit into Arabic by Fazāri with the assistance of Indian scholars. According to Tabari, Caliph Harun-al-Rashid was cured of an obstinate malady by an Indian physician. Lastly, *zuhd* or asceticism 'which arose in opposition to legal Islam,' appears to have been advocated by such teachers as Abūl-Atāhiyah (748-825 A. D.) who was revered as 'an example of a highly honoured man : "the king in the garments of a beggar . . . .it is he whose reverence is great among men." 'Is he not the Buddha ?' asks Goldziher.

Sind was Hind in miniature. The annals of the Arabs in that province were the epitome of the fortunes of Islam in India. The Crescent on the horizon was indeed destined to rise to the zenith of the Imperial sky, but it was to remain only a crescent and not the full moon.

SOME RELEVANT DATES

A.D.	
637	Arabs in Persia.
650	Islam reaches the Oxus.
664	Arabs convert 12,000 Hindus in Kabul.
713	Arab conquests extend to the Sea of Aral and the Jaxartes.
725-40	Arabs in Gujarat and Mālwa.
750	Abbasids overthrow the Omayid Caliphate at Damascus.
788	Earliest dated (166 Hegira) Muslim tomb found in Malabar.
850	Amoghavarsha Rāshtrakūta described by Arab traveller (Sulaiman) as one of the four great rulers of the world. Rāshtrakūtas friendly towards Arabs.
871	Sind slips out of the hands of the Caliphs.
840-940	Gurjara-Pratihāras (Mihira Bhoja and Mahipāla) stem Arab inroads.
950	Bhīma (Brāhmaṇ Shāhi), grandfather of queen Didda of Kashmir, rules over Kabul. Jayapāla who fought Ghazni was Bhīma's successor.
950-99	Dhanga, ruler of Chāndels (Mahoba), joins Jayapāla's confederacy.

A.D.

958-1003 Didda and her favourites rule over Kashmir.

961 Solānki usurpation at Anhilwārā (Gujarat).

962 Alptagin establishes himself at Ghazni.

972 Harshasimha of Mālwa plunders Rāshtrakūta capital (Mānyakheta).

975 First clash between Hindu Kabul and Muslim Ghazni.

977 Sabuktagin succeeds at Ghazni.

985-1016 Rājarāja Chola rules over South India.

991 Jayapāla's confederacy overthrown in Kurram valley by Sabuktagin.

995 Munja of Mālwa killed during his sixth invasion of Chālukya territory.

997 Mahmūd succeeds Sabuktagin in Ghazni.

1001 Mahmūd's first invasion of India.

1008 Ānandapāla defeated at Peshawar.

1010-65 Bhoja the Great King of Mālwa : wars against Chedi, Lāta (Gujarat), Karnātak, etc.

1023 Rājendra Chola I invades Bengal, etc.

1025 Somnāth plundered by Mahmūd Ghazni.

1044-62 Chālukya Vikramāditya invades Bengal, etc.

CHAPTER III

THE ICONOCLAST IN INDIA

End of the Arab Adventure :

After Sind and Multan, it was the turn of the Punjab to become a Muslim province. This time it was no punitive expedition like that of the Arabs, but a plundering raid by a Turkish adventurer. Though Sind and Multan continued to be under the Muslims until the next invasion from the north-west, there were no fresh conquests following those of Imād-ud-dīn. Besides, Imād-ud-dīn was not a condottiere acting on his own wild impulse, but represented the established authority of the Caliph, the supreme head of the Islamic world. Mahmūd Ghazni (997-1030 A. D.), whose exploits we are to deal with in this chapter, invaded India successively no less than seventeen times, on his own behalf, established a dynasty which ruled over the Punjab for over 150 years (1030-1186 A. D.), and finally led on to immediate successors in conquest who kept up the continuity of Muslim dominion in India. Like Babur in later times, or perhaps more like Nādir Shāh, Mahmūd had a career outside India which is of no less interest than his doings in this country. The Arabs in the eighth century simply broke the ice, whereas Mahmūd Ghazni opened up India to the Islamic flood from Transoxiana which was already beating on the shores of the declining Caliphate of Bagdad. In order the better to understand the full meaning of the Ghazni raids it is necessary to survey the conditions across the Hindu-kush.

The Arabs had reached Persia as early as 632 A. D., the year of the Prophet's death. They defeated and killed the Sassanian Emperor Rustam at the battle of Kadessia, 637 A. D., and by the middle of the century (650 A. D.) extended the rule of the Crescent up to the Oxus. About fifteen years later (664 A. D.) they invaded Kabul and made 12,000 converts, though the country could not be conquered on account of the strong position of its infidel rulers. Who these were we shall presently consider. Finally, about the period of the conquest of Sind, the Arabs also crossed the Oxus river, took Samarkand

and Bukhara, subdued Khwarizm on the Aral lake, reduced the kingdom of Ferghana, and extended Arab rule up to Mt. Imaus and the Jaxartes (713 A. D.). For well over a century after this the Caliphate enjoyed the luxury, power and prestige of these far-reaching conquests. Then came the inevitable decline referred to in the previous chapter. Elphinstone has well depicted the stages of its fall. The spirit of the Caliphs was gradually transformed. From 'fanatical missionaries' they became 'politic sovereigns, more intent on the aggrandisement of their families than the propagation of their faith; and by the same degrees they altered from rude soldiers to magnificent and luxurious princes, who had other occupations besides war, and other pleasures as attractive as those of victory. Omar set out to his army at Jerusalem with his arms and provisions on the same camel with himself; Othman extinguished his lamp, when he had finished the labours of the day, that the public oil might not be expended on his enjoyments; Al-Mahdi, within a century from the last named Caliph, loaded 500 camels with ice and snow; and the profusion of one day of the Abbasids would have defrayed all the expenses of the four first Caliphs.' While luxury and fratricidal wars were sapping the Caliphate at its core, a new force was rising within the Empire which was soon to undermine its very existence. That force came from the Turks. With their advent the Arab adventure came to an end.

The Rise of the Turks :

The Turks were a people altogether different from both the Arabs and the Persians. The primitive simplicity and vigour of the Arabs of the desert peninsula at first yielded to the magnificent autocracy and ease of the more cultured Persian. Then in the next stage the Turks turned the faith and fortunes of Islam in an altogether new direction. The Arab had led it to Cordova, and the Iranians to Bagdad; the Turks took it to Delhi. The conversion of Transoxiana led to the conversion of Islam itself. Where the genuine fervour of the original protagonists had failed in the course of less than two centuries (711-871 A. D.), the fanatical zeal of callow converts was to endure beyond the utmost dreams of Hajjaj and Imād-ud-dīn. The fate of India was being decided beyond the Hindu-kush when during the ninth and tenth centuries A. D. the Turks tilted the scales against their masters at Bagdad and Bukhara, creating independent

principalities of their own. The founders of these kingdoms in the Persian and Afghan dominions of the Caliphs were Turkish slaves but destined to revive and extend the power of the Crescent and enslave the vast infidel populations of India. A series of accidents deflected the ferocious, greedy and fanatical Turks into the valley of the Indus whence they were lured into the richer plains of Hindustan. The first of these happenings was in the kingdom of Kabul.

The Retreat of Brāhmaṇ Shāhi :

An allusion was made above to the conversion of 12,000 people to Islam, in 664 A. D., during one of the early incursions of the Arabs into the Kabul territory. We attributed the comparative ill-success of Muslim advance in this direction to the strength of the Kabul rulers. Though different surmises have been made about the nationality of these rulers, some thinking them to have been Persians and others Turkish, we have plausible grounds to believe that they were Hindus.

Buddhists existed in large numbers in this region since the days of Asoka and Kanishka. When Hiuen Tsiang visited the country it was ruled by a Kshatriya prince. According to Al-Biruni, this line of kings, known as the Shāhi dynasty, counted sixty rulers, and the last of them, called Lagatūrmān, was overthrown by his Brāhmaṇ minister at the close of the ninth century A. D. Al-Biruni's account finds confirmation both in the coins of the Brāhmaṇ kings named by him and in the independent account given by Kalhaṇa in the *Rājataraṅgiṇi*. In the light of this multiple evidence, about 950 A.D. Bhīma, the grandfather of Queen Didda of Kashmir, was ruling over Kabul. His successor was Jayapāla whose memory deserves to be cherished as the first Hindu king who struggled heroically against the Turkish flood surging into Hindustan. Despite the support that the Brāhmaṇ rulers of Kabul received from their relatives, the rulers of Kashmir, they could not long hold out against the Ghaznavids in the Kabul valley and had to fall back on Bhātinda (in the Patiālā State) to organise a better defence.

The Kingdom of Ghazni :

Lane-Poole has characterised the southerly migration of the Turks as 'the master-movement in the Muhammadan empire in the tenth and eleventh centuries.' The effeminate Caliphs had first used

them as praetorians ; 'but it was introducing the wooden horse into the Muslim Troy.' They soon became masters of the Caliphs, acquired control over the provinces, and dominated the Empire from Egypt to Samarkand. One of the Turkish officers, Alptagin (or Alp Tegin), with a couple of thousand followers established himself in the fortress of Ghazni (Arabic *Ghazna*, Persian *Ghaznin*) in the heart of the Afghan mountains (962 A.D.). It is remarkable how this little stronghold, in the course of a generation or two, became the seat of a mighty Empire extending from Lahore to the borders of Bagdad, and from Sind to Samarkand. This was the work of two redoubtable warriors, Sabuktagin, the slave of Alptagin, and his son Mahmūd. The former succeeded his master in 796 A. D. and ruled for twenty years ; the latter for thirty-three years, 997-1030 A. D. " Sabuktagin was the first Muslim who attempted the invasion of India from the north-west." But his more famous son, Mahmūd, made himself easily the foremost ruler of his age in the Islamic world. And what is more important for us, he also determined the future of India. While his prestige and power were fed from the spoils of this country, during his life-time, the last of his successors, when hounded out of his home by the new Afghan power of the Ghūrids, about 1150 A.D., was to find asylum in the land his great ancestor had plundered.

Early Encounters :

A new broom, it is said, sweeps well. So did Sabuktagin. Under the impulse of both his newly acquired power at Ghazni and the religious frenzy of his fresh converted race, the slave-king struck right and left. Kabul, being so dangerously near to Ghazni could hardly escape his attention. In a few ill-matched engagements the Hindus got the worst of the situation and Jayapāla, as we saw, withdrew into the Punjab. According to Sir Wolseley Haig, the Hindus were the aggressors. After Alptagin, during the reign of Pīrāi (972-77 A. D.) he says, the first conflict between the Hindus and Muslims took place, "the former being the aggressors. The rājā of the Punjab, whose dominions extended to the Hindukush and included Kabul, was alarmed by the establishment of a Muslim kingdom to the south of the great mountain barrier and invaded the dominion of Ghazni, but was defeated." However, we cannot forget that three centuries earlier (in 664 A. D.) the Arabs had encroached into the kingdom and converted 12,000 of its inhabitants. The struggle had since then been continued

down the centuries, and the alleged Hindu offensive was only the last of a series. It must be remembered to the credit of the Indian rulers of Kabul that they had manfully struggled through three centuries (664-977 A. D.) against a power that had already submerged Persia and Turkistan. In 986 A. D. Sabuktagin invaded Kabul and carried off much booty and many captives. Again two years later he repeated his exploits and compelled Jayapāla to cede Kabul and much other territory besides. But Sabuktagin never crossed the Indus. This task was left to his more intrepid son.

Mahmūd of Ghazni :

Mahmūd ascended the throne of Ghazni on the death of his father (997 A. D.) but after a brief war of succession with his brother Ismail who was defeated and imprisoned for the rest of his life. This was an evil augury for one who was to be the first Muslim king of Hindustan, but it was too common a feature in the history of Islam to attract attention. Mahmūd, born on 1st November 971 A. D., was twenty-seven years of age when he became king in 998 A. D. Already he had been governor of Khurasan for four years since its acquisition in 994 A. D. Within a year of his accession Mahmūd subdued Sistan and got from the Caliph of Bagdad, Al-Kādir Bīllāh, a robe of honour and letters patent formally conferring on him the sovereignty over Afghanistan, Sistan and Khurasan, besides the titles *Yamīn-ud-Daulah* and *Amīn-ul-Millah*. On this solemn occasion Mahmūd took the sacred vow to wage war (*jihād*) on the infidels and lead an annual expedition into India to destroy idolatry. But owing to a rebellion in Khurasan he could not commence his great series of raids into Hindustan until two years later.

Iconoclastic Expeditions :

The character rather than the number of Muhmud's Indian expeditions is important for understanding the history of the Crescent in this country. The number and frequency of the raids only throw light upon the tireless energy of the invaders, while their easy success affords a commentary upon the state of Hindu India. The motives as well as the circumstances of the first expeditions (1001 A.D.) may be best gathered from Utbi, Mahmūd's court historian.

'Sultan Mahmūd,' he writes in his *Tarikh-i-Yamini*, 'at first designed in his heart to go to Sijistan, but subsequently preferred engaging previously

in a holy war against Hind.' Then he distributed arms and called a council 'in order to secure a blessing on his designs of exalting the standard of religion, of widening the plain of right, of illuminating the words of truth, and of strengthening the power of justice.' Afterwards he marched towards India 'in full reliance on the aid of God, who guiding by His light and by His power, bestowed dignity upon him and gave him victory in all his expeditions.'

On reaching Peshawar Mahmūd 'received intelligence of the bold resolve of Jaipāl, the *enemy of God*, and king of Hind, to offer opposition, and of his rapid advance towards meeting his fate in the field of battle.'

The precautions taken by Mahmūd at this stage were an indication of his superior generalship which was bound to triumph against the valiant but ill-assorted army of Hindustan. He 'took a muster of his horses and of all his warriors and vassals from those in whose records it was entered, and then selected from among his troops 15,000 cavalry men and officers, all bold, and *strictly prohibited those who were rejected and not fit or disposed for war from joining those who had been chosen* and who were like dragons of the desert and lions of the forest.'

As against these, Jayapāla's forces numbered 12,000 cavalry, 30,000 infantry, and 300 elephantry. While this already vast host was awaiting further reinforcements, the invader forced action by taking the offensive, believing as Utbi records, 'Often-times a small army overcomes a large one by the order of God.' The result was that 'swords flashed like lightning amid the blackness of clouds, and fountains of blood flowed like the fall of setting stars. The friends of God defeated their obstinate opponents and quickly put them to a complete rout. Noon had not arrived when the Muslims had wreaked their vengeance on the infidel enemies of God, killing 15,000 of them, spreading them like a carpet over the ground, and making them food for beasts and birds of prey.'

Jayapāla, his chief officers, and relatives were taken prisoners, 'and being strongly bound with ropes were carried before the Sultan like as evildoers on whose faces the fumes of infidelity are evident...and will be bound and carried to hell. Some had their arms forcibly tied behind their backs, some were seized by the cheek, some were driven by blows on the neck.'

The 'friends of God' were not unmindful of the gold. So 'the necklace was taken off the neck of Jaipāl, composed of large pearls and shining gems and rubies set in gold, of which the value was 200,000 *dinars*; and twice that value was obtained from the necks of those relations who were taken prisoners or slain...God also bestowed upon his friends such an amount of booty as was beyond all bounds and calculation, including 500,000 slaves (evidently captured after the battle from the surrounding country), beautiful men and women.'

After this 'splendid and celebrated action' which 'took place on Thursday, the 8th of Muharram, 392 H.' (27th November 1001 A. D.)

the Sultan returned ; 'for the Almighty had given them victory over a province of the country of Hind, broader and longer and more fertile than Khurasan.' Comments are needless. But the psychological reactions on the two parties must not be missed.

Jayapāla was ransomed for another 25,000 *dinars* besides valuable hostages surrendered. But he could not suffer himself to survive the shock of this humiliation. To be defeated was an accident of war ; he had won and lost battles valiantly fought in the past. But to have been taken captive by the Mlechcha and treated in the manner he was by Mahmūd was worthy of only one *prāyaschitta* in the code of his country and that he paid willingly. He perished on a self-kindled pyre.

On Mahmūd himself and his co-religionists the effect was marvellous as might be expected. The easy victory redoubled their self-confidence while the booty whetted their appetite for more. To these allurements religion gave a justification by blessing the whole enterprise as *jihād* against the infidels.

War on Heresy :

Another aspect of the Ghazni raids may be noted at this stage. Sind and Multan were already Muslim provinces, but as stated previously they had become an asylum for all kinds of heretics. Of these the Karmatians were perhaps the most hated. They were a sect founded by Hamdān Karmat and were contemptuous towards orthodox Islam. They had gone to the extent of invading Mecca and carrying away the Black Stone of Kaaba and other holy relics. Abdul Fatah Daud, the ruler of Multan, was a heretic of this order ; hence in Mahmūd's eyes worthy of chastisement even like the infidel idolaters. In 1004-5 A. D., therefore, while Mahmūd led an expedition to Bhīrā, on the left bank of the Jhelum, he also intended to conquer Multan. But Ānandapāla, son of Jayapāla, stood in his way. Nevertheless Mahmūd, the invincible, triumphed over all. Bhīrā was captured, Ānandapāla's army was scattered, and 20,000 *dirhams* were levied from Multan as a contribution 'with which to requite their sins.' Then the invader returned to Kabul leaving his Indian conquests in the charge of Nawāsā Shāh (Sevakapāla), a converted Hindu.

A National Challenge :

This experiment, however, did not prove successful, for Nawāsā

turned truant and Mahmūd had to come down again (1008 A.D.). 400,000 *dirhams* was the penalty the recalcitrant convert had to pay for his abjuration of Islam. By that time Daud of Multan and Ānandapāla had also joined together like Rāṇa Sanga and Hasan Khān Mewāti against Babur five centuries later. A formidable coalition was formed which the Rājas of Ujjain, Gwalior, Kalinga, Kanauj, Delhi, and Ajmer also entered.

According to Ferishta, they 'now considered the expulsion of the Muhammadans from India as a sacred duty. Ānandapāla himself took the command and advanced to meet the invader...Troops of the idolaters daily increased in number and aid came to them from all sides...The Hindu females on this occasion sold their jewels and sent the proceeds from distant parts to their husbands, so that they being supplied with all necessaries for the march might be in earnest in the war. Those who were poor contributed from their earnings by spinning cotton and other labour. The Sultan perceived that on this occasion the idolaters behaved most devotedly and that it was necessary to be very circumspect in striking the first blow.'

Mahmūd changed his strategy to meet the situation. Far from taking the offensive, as he had done against Jayapāla eight years earlier, he occupied an entrenched position in the plain of Peshawar and allowed the enemy to do their worst. But in spite of the Sultan's precautions,

Ferishta continues, 'during the heat of the battle, 30,000 infidel Khokārs, with their heads and feet bare and armed with spears and other weapons, penetrated on two sides into the Muhammadan lines, and forcing their way into the midst of the cavalry, they cut down men and horses with their swords, daggers and spears, so that in a few minutes they slaughtered three or four thousand Muslims. They carried their success so far that the Sultan, observing the fury of these Khokār footmen, withdrew himself from the thick of the fight that he might stop the battle for that day.' Other accounts suggest that he even contemplated retreat. But the oft to be repeated mishap of Indian armies in those days took place as in the case of Dahir before the Arabs. The elephant upon which Ānandapāla rode, 'becoming unruly from the effects of naphta balls and the flight of arrows, turned and fled. The Hindus, deeming this to be the signal for flight on the part of their general, all gave way and fled, so that 8,000 Hindus were killed in the retreat. Thirty elephants and *enormous booty fell into the hands of the pursuers,* with which they returned to the Sultan.'

So ended the best organised and most determined and stupendous national effort ever made by medieval Hindu India against the foreigner. Encouraged by this piece of extreme good luck, Mahmūd advanced further into Hindustan.

The Harvest of Gold :

All had been hitherto tentative. Perhaps only a game of chance. The Indian expedition was almost winter sport. When conditions in the home provinces permitted the diversion, the Turk would descend into the plains of Hindustan. Here it was not so cold in the winter. Spring and summer at home would be more enjoyable with the spoils of the infidel country gathered during autumn and winter. The up-rooting of heresy and the destruction of idolatry were also good for 'the health of the souls' of 'the friends of God.' But the defeat of the national coalition at Peshawar in 1008 A.D. opened up a new chapter in the Odyssey of Mahmūd. Thereafter he was definitely in search of the Golden Fleece.

Nagarkot (1009 A.D.), Thānesar (1014 A.D.), Mathura (1018 A. D.), Kanauj (1019 A. D.), and Somnāth (1025 A.D.), are letters of gold written on the tablet of Mahmūd's avaricious heart. He gloated over their treasures, and in the invective of an embittered poet :

> The King of Khorasan saw in a dream
> Mahmūd, the son of Sabuktagin,
> Dead for this hundred years and more ;
> His head and his heart, his arms and his thighs,
> Dissolved in dust ; and *only his eyes*
> *Moved in their sockets, and saw*
> *His gold,* his empire, and everything
> He loved, in the hands of another King.

With the plunder of the ancient temple of Nagarkot (Kangra), in 1008 A.D., the tiger tasted human blood. He did not seem to be satiated until he had despoiled Somnāth (1025 A. D.). Then destiny called him to Ghazni.

Mahmūd was a seasoned soldier. Fear found no place in his heart. Yet after Jayapāla, the Brāhmaṇ ruler of the Punjab, who fought in the spirit of a Kshatriya, Mahmūd found no foeman worthy of his steel among the rulers of the land. His army scored through the kingdoms of Hindustan 'like a comb through a poll of hair.' " Forts and cities surrendered as the great Sultan passed by ; abject chiefs placed their followers at his disposal. He fought when neces-sary, but more often triumphed by mere prestige." The whole coun-try seemed to be paralysed after Peshawar. If there was no good fighting to be had among princes, to keep up the high spirits of his ruddy warriors, there was plenty of gold in the temples to excite their

cupidity. The holy game of destroying idol temples would enable them to serve both God and Mammon at the same time.

In temple after temple the same tale unfolded itself. "The Hindus saw the enemy coming like a swarm of locusts, they opened the gate out of fear and 'fell on the earth, like sparrows before a hawk, or rain before lightning.'" At Nagarkot, in the estimates of Utbi, 'the treasures were laden on the backs of as many camels as they could procure, and the officers carried away the rest. The stamped coin amounted to 70,000 royal *dirhams*, and the gold and silver ingots amounted to 700,400 *maṇs* in weight, besides wearing apparel and fine cloths of Ṡus, respecting which old men said they never remembered to have seen any so fine, soft and embroidered. Among the booty was a house of white silver, like to the houses of rich men, the length of which was thirty yards and the breadth fifteen. It could be taken to pieces and put together again. And there was a canopy, made of the linen of Rūm, forty yards long and twenty broad, supported on two golden and two silver poles which had been cast in moulds.'

Nowhere else did Mahmūd display more deliberate and atrocious vandalism than at Mathura and Brindāvan. To admire, appreciate and then destroy is worse than never to have admired at all. Neither Alaric the Goth, nor Attila the Hun, nor even the Norman bandit Robert Guiscard, who sacked Rome in 1084 A.D. in league with the Muslims, indulged in such wanton crime against humanity and civilization. Even when the Caliph Omar destroyed the ancient library of Alexandria he did so out of an utter lack of appreciation of its treasures. Hence Mahmūd's egregious conduct at Mathura is without a parallel in history. Utbi's description of it makes further condemnation superfluous.

When Mahmūd reached Mathura, writes his own court historian, 'he saw a city of wonderful fabric and conception, so that one might say this is a building of paradise, but its accidents or qualities could only come by the aid of the infernals and an intelligent man would hardly receive favourably the account of it...Around it...they had placed one thousand castles built of stone which they had made idol temples.... And in the midst of the city they had built a temple higher than all, *to delineate the beauty and decoration of which the pens of all writers and the pencils of all painters would be powerless*, and would not be able to attain to the power of fixing their minds upon it and considering it. *In the memoir which the Sultan wrote of this journey he thus declares that if anyone should undertake to*

build a fabric like that, he would expend thereon 100,000 packets of a thousand dinars, and would not complete it in 200 years, with the assistance of the most ingenious architects.' Then he goes on to describe the five idols of pure gold, each ' of the height of 5 cubits in the air ' and on one of which was a jacinth ' such a one that if the Sultan had seen it exposed in the *bazar*, he would have considered as underpriced at 50,000 *dinars*, and would have bought it with great eagerness.' Upon another idol was a sapphire ' of one solid piece, of azure water, of the value of 400 fine *miskals*.' From the two feet of a third idol alone they obtained 400,000 *miskals* of gold. The idols of silver ' were a hundred times more, so that it occupied those who estimated their standard weight a long time in weighing them.' They devastated the entire city and moved on to Kanauj.

Kanauj was to medieval Hindu India what Pātaliputra was to ancient and Delhi to Muslim India. It was the imperial capital of Hindustan since Harsha moved from Thānesar. The great Gurjara-Pratihāras also ruled from this centre. The spoliation of this city by Mahmūd should have, therefore, virtually meant the establishment of the Ghazni empire in India. But it was no more significant than the later sack of Delhi by Timūr and Nādir Shāh. The iconoclast was more intent on plunder than building up Crescentdom in India. That task was left to his Afghan successor Muhammad Ghūri (1163-1206 A.D.). Meanwhile,

> Kanauj bowed low before the blast
> In patient deep disdain ;
> She let the legions thunder past,
> And plunged in feuds again.

The exploits of Nagarkot, Thānesar, and Mathura were repeated. Rājyapāla, the Pratihāra king of Kanauj, submitted. The seven forts of the city were captured in a day. Its ' 10,000 temples ' were looted and destroyed, and Mahmūd marched off to Ghazni with plunder valued at 3,000,000 *dirhams*, together with 55,000 slaves and 350 elephants.

The effect on the world of Islam was tremendous. It was greater and farther reaching than that to be produced later when Babur distributed his Indian spoils with a lavish hand among all his coreligionists. We shall estimate it finally when we have described Mahmūd's *magnum opus* the plunder of Somnāth (1025 A.D.). Before this, however, we must take a glimpse of Hindu India at this critical stage.

A Glimpse of Hindu India :

Mahmūd had already led several expeditions into the country, but

the Hindus seemed to think with the cynic that 'History teaches but one lesson, namely, there are no lessons to be learnt from History.' If Al-Biruni, a contemporary, about whom more later, is to be trusted, Ānandapāla after his own defeat wrote to Mahmūd, "I learn the Turks have rebelled against you. If you wish I shall come to you or send my son with 500 horse, 1,000 soldiers and 100 elephants. *I have been conquered by you and therefore wish that another man should not conquer you.*" Ānandapāla's son, Trilochanapāla nevertheless, appears to have fought against Mahmūd being assisted by the Kashmiri general Tunga as we saw in the first chapter. Both were defeated, as also Trilochana's son, Nidar Bhīma, who fleeing to Kashmir drew the Muslims into that kingdom. Mahmūd on this occasion (c. 1011 A.D.) is said to have plundered Kashmir and compelled a great many people to embrace Islam. Again he returned from Ghazni in 1018 A. D. and on his way, crossing the Jamuna, received the submission of Hara Datta, the Rāja of Baran (Bulandshahr) who allowed himself to be converted to Islam together with 10,000 followers. Another chieftain, Kulchand of Mahawan, offering gallant opposition, was killed along with 50,000 people dyeing the Jamuna red with their blood.

After the sack of Kanauj (1019 A.D.) once more Mahmūd combed the country with his army capturing the forts of Munj, Asni, Sharwa, Gwalior and Kālinjar. The Hindu princes instead of co-operating among themselves quarrelled. Rājyapāla of Kanauj being at first left alone to submit to the invader was later on punished for his weakness. No sooner than Mahmūd's back was turned, Ganda the Chāndel Rāja of Kālinjar, joining with the prince of Gwalior, attacked and slew Rājyapāla. This drew Mahmūd again into the plains and the peevish princes of Hindustan were chastised for ever. They made a formidable display of their numbers (according to Ferishta : 36,000 horses, 45,000 foot and 640 elephants) and then turned tail. Mahmūd triumphed as usual, receiving submission, backed with enormous booty including riches and elephants, and returned to Ghazni (1022 A.D.).

Last Act of Butshikan :

The last act of this melodrama was enacted in 1025 A.D. Mahmūd left his capital on 17 October, 1024 A.D., with an army double that with which he had fought his first Indian battle twenty-five years

earlier. Marching at the head of his own army of picked warriors, he was followed besides by a body of 30,000 volunteers from Turkistan and other countries, attracted by prospects of plunder. They reached Multan on 20 November, 1024 A.D. The objective this time was Somnāth, on the Kathiawar coast, a temple far exceeding in wealth and importance any he had yet quarried.

Very elaborate preparations were made, for the route lay through the inhospitable desert *via* Sāmbhar (Ajmer) and Anhilwārā. (Pātan). "Each trooper was ordered to carry with him fodder, water and food for several days, and Mahmūd supplemented individual efforts by loading his own establishment of 30,000 camels with water and supplies for the desert march." Reaching Anhilwārā in January 1025 A.D. Mahmūd discovered that its Rāja, Bhīmdeo, and most of the inhabitants had fled. The remnants were defeated and plundered. At Dewalwārā on the way the people had stuck to their places fondly believing that the great Somnāth would not allow even a hair of his devotee's head to be touched. The rest of the tragedy may be related in the words of Ibn-al-Athir :—

The friends of God reached Somnāth on a Thursday in the middle of Zu-l-Ka'da, and there beheld 'a strong fortress built upon the seashore, so that it was washed by the waves. The people of the fort were on the walls amusing themselves at the expense of the confident Muslims, telling them that their deity would cut off the last man of them and destroy them all. On the morrow which was Friday, the assailants advanced to the assault, and when the Hindus beheld the Muhammadans fighting, they abandoned their posts and left the walls. The Muslims planted their ladders against the walls and gained the summit ; then they proclaimed their success with their religious war-cry and exhibited the prowess of Islam. Then followed a fearful slaughter and matters wore a serious aspect.

'A body of Hindus hurried to Somnāth, cast themselves before the deity and besought him to grant them victory. Night came on and the fight was suspended. Next morning early the Muhammadans renewed the battle and made greater havoc among the Hindus, till they drove them from the town to the house of their idol Somnāth. A dreadful slaughter followed at the gate of the temple. Band after band of defenders entered the temple and with their hands clasped round their necks wept and passionately entreated Somnāth. Then again they issued forth to fight until they were slain, and but few were left alive. These took to the sea in boats to make their escape, but the Muslims overtook them, and some were killed and some were drowned.'

The principal idol was broken and its pieces were sent to Ghazni, Mecca and Bagdad to be used as stepping stones by the faithful.

'The treasury was near and in it there were many idols of gold and silver. Over it there were veils hanging, set with jewels, every one of which was of immense value. The worth of what was found in the temple exceeded 2,000,000 *dinars*, all of which was taken. The number of the slain exceeded 50,000.'

Thus was medieval Hindu India's Holy of Holies desecrated, devastated and looted. Besides Ganges water being brought daily to wash the idol, the sea itself laved the temple steps at every flow of the tide. The shrine was endowed with more than 10,000 villages for its upkeep, and yet the most precious gifts poured in from all parts of the country. The temple bells were hung with chains of gold weighing 200 *maṇs*. 'A thousand Brāhmaṇs were employed in worshipping the idol and attending on the visitors, and 500 damsels sung and danced at the door.' Among the wonders of that place, writes Zakariya-al-Kazwini, was the idol of Somnāth.

'It was in the middle of the temple without anything to support from below, or to suspend it from above. It was held in the highest honour among the Hindus and whoever beheld it floating in the air was struck with amazement, whether he was a Musalman or an infidel. The Hindus used to go on pilgrimage to it whenever there was an eclipse of the moon and would then assemble there to the number of more than 100,000.

'When the King (Mahmūd) asked his companions what they had to say about the marvel of the idol and of its staying in the air without prop or support, several maintained that it was upheld by some hidden support. The King directed a person to go and feel all around and above and below it with a spear, which he did but met with no obstacle. One of the attendants then stated his opinion that the canopy was made of lode-stone, and the idol of iron, and that the ingenious builder had skilfully contrived that the magnet should not exercise a greater force on any one side—hence the idol was suspended in the middle. Some coincided and others differed. Permission was obtained from the Sultan to remove some stones from the top of the canopy to settle the point. When two stones were removed from the summit the idol swerved on one side; when more were taken away it inclined still further, until at last it rested on the ground.'

Rich freighted with the spoils of Somnāth, Mahmūd returned to Ghazni after a scrape or two by a more westerly route through Sind. Though past fifty years of age and surrounded with troubles nearer home, he led his last punitive expedition in 1027 A.D., against the Jats of Sind for having harassed him during the previous year. With this culminated his Indian career. Of the only Indian province, viz., the Punjab, which he annexed to his dominion and its administrative

history we shall deal with a little later. Here we must close with a final estimate of the great Butshikan (Iconoclast).

The Janus-headed Sultan :

Mahmūd, like most Muhammadan rulers of Hindustan after him, was double-faced in his character. The ruthless despoiler of temples in India was also the paragon of cultured monarchs among his own people at home. It is said that Mahmūd had a very ugly pox-marked face like Timūr's and that he tried to compensate for it by trying to acquire an attractive mien as a ruler. It might be said with truth that the former reflected his demeanour in India and the latter his character at home. In short, Mahmūd was an angel to his Muslim subjects at Ghazni and the devil incarnate to infidels abroad. Though more affected directly by his doings in this country than his reputation in the Islamic world, we cannot for reasons that will become apparent hereafter ignore the other side of the picture.

When Mahmūd returned home in 1026 A.D. after his last and most arduous temple raid, and spread out the enormous loot before the ravishing gaze of his Ghazni subjects, the entire Muslim world rang with a pæan of praise. The Caliph bestowed on him and his sons fresh honours and titles. Though his modern enlightened Indian Muslim biographer, Professor Habib, might think that "Islam sanctioned neither the vandalism nor the plundering motives of the invader," to his own contemporaries Mahmūd Butshikan was undoubtedly a great Ghāzi and the greatest Muslim monarch of his age. There was little exaggeration in this admiring appreciation. Mahmūd's Empire was more extensive than that of the Caliph of Bagdad. The latter was nominally the head of the Islamic world, but even here he had partners in the sovereignty owing to the establishment of the Cairo and Cordova Caliphates. Nearer home the dominions of the Commander of the Faithful had come to be shared among numerous Turkish or other princes of whom Mahmūd was for the time being the greatest. So powerful had the ruler of Ghazni become that he not only overawed all the rest of his tribe, but also made the Caliphate feel precarious. In the words of E. B. Havell, "He would have sacked Baghdad with as little compunction as he plundered Somnāth, if the undertaking had seemed as profitable and as easy, for he did not hesitate to threaten the Khalif with death when the latter refused to give him Samarkand." Such a powerful

ruler, had he the resources and the taste for it, would not rest his prestige on mere conquest. Mahmūd was no barbarian though he was guilty of barbarous acts during his Indian raids.

Like Louis XIV of France, nearly seven centuries later, Mahmūd, made his court and capital the centre of a solar system of which he himself was the Sun. Great architects, scholars, poets and artists were summoned from all parts of his wide dominions to embellish Ghazni. "Napoleon," writes Lane-Poole, "imported the choicest works of art from the countries he subdued to adorn his Paris ; Mahmūd did better, he brought the artists and the poets themselves to illuminate his Court. From the cities of the Oxus and the shore of the Caspian, from Persia and Khorasan, he pressed into his service the lights of oriental letters, and compelled them not unwillingly, to revolve round his sun like planets in his firmament of glory." Of these planets we have space to speak of only a few, those of the greatest magnitude. Looking at them through the Indian telescope, Al-Biruni eclipses all others, even the most celebrated author of *Shāhnāmāh*, Firdausi, himself. Then comes Utbi, the historian secretary of Mahmūd, to whose first-hand reports we are so much indebted. To these might be added Baihaki 'the oriental Mr. Pepys' (Lane-Poole calls him) whose gossiping memoirs lend colour to Utbi's more matter of fact pictures.

Much has been written about these and others, particularly Firdausi, by writers of medieval Indian history. Without digressing into such irrelevancies, we would say a few words about Al-Biruni alone. He was a native of Khiva, born in 973 A.D., and therefore two years younger than the Sultan. He outlived Mahmūd Ghazni by eighteen years and died in 1048 A.D. He was a scholar, learned in 'astronomy, mathematics, chronology, mathematical geography, physics, chemistry and minerology.' But chief interest for us lies in '*Al-Biruni's India*' a work which its learned translator describes as 'a magic island of quiet impartial research in the midst of a world of clashing swords, burning towns, and plundered temples.' It contains Al-Biruni's observations on the history, character, manners and customs of the Hindus which are all carefully and dispassionately recorded. According to him, 'Unfortunately the Hindus do not pay much attention to historical order of things, and they are very careless in relating the chronological order of their kings, etc., and when pressed for information not knowing what to say invariably take to tale-

telling.' The writer of this unpalatable criticism had read our *Purāṇas* and also admired our philosophy, especially the *Bhagavad Gītā.* He could read them in Sanskrit. Al-Biruni was not less critical of his master, for he did not approve of his insensate orgies of destruction in India. The scattered remains of the Hindus, he wrote, 'cherish, of course, the most inveterate hatred of all Muslims. This is the reason, too, why Hindu sciences have retired far away from those parts of the country conquered by us, and have fled to places where our hands cannot yet reach, to Kashmir, Benares and other places.'

To return to Mahmūd, there is hardly anything more to be added that will be apposite. Many anecdotes are told of his great sense of justice. Nizām-ul-mulk (not to be confounded with his namesake the celebrated founder of the Nizām's Dominions) the Seljuk *vezir*, whom Lane-Poole calls the most sagacious and high-minded Asiatic statesman of the Middle Ages, thought that 'Mahmūd was a just sovereign, a lover of learning, a man of generous nature and of pure faith.' Without quarrelling with this estimate we might repeat the wail of a disappointed lover : 'What if she be fair, if she be not fair to me.' To India Mahmūd Ghazni was a gifted condottiere.

There is one other aspect of Mahmūd's life, however, which we must consider before we can pass on to his successors. What did Mahmūd do to perpetuate his realm ? Nothing, or even worse than nothing, for he contemplated a division of his empire among his sons. " A great soldier, a man of infinite courage and indefatigable energy of mind and body," writes Lane-Poole, " Mahmūd was no constructive or far-seeing statesman. We hear of no laws or institutions or methods of government that sprang from his initiative. Outward order and security was all he attempted to attain in his unwieldy empire ; to organize and consolidate was not in his scheme. He left his dominions so ill-knitted together that they began to fall asunder as soon as he was no longer alive to guard them by his vigilant activity." While appreciative of Mahmūd's other great qualities Elphinstone was also of opinion that " Even his Indian operations, for which all other objects were resigned, are so far from displaying any sense of system or combination, that their desultory and inconclusive nature would lead us to deny him a comprehensive intellect, unless we suppose its range to have been contracted by the sordid passions of his heart."

India and the House of Ghazni :

Under such circumstances it is a wonder that the House of Ghazni endured at all for over 150 years after the death of Mahmūd, which occurred in 1030 A.D. Yet the tale of his successors is soon told, for there was no outstanding figure among them, at any rate after Masūd. Besides, we are little concerned with their intestine wars and bickerings. 'Discord, degeneracy and decay' sum up the character of the period from 1030 to 1186 A.D. There were in all fifteen rulers after Mahmūd including Tughril an usurper (1052 A.D.). Only one among these, Ibrāhim, ruled as many as forty years (1059-99 A.D.); Bahrām Shāh, with much diminished power, reigned during thirty-five years (1118-52 A.D.). The last of the family, Khusrū Malik, was nominally king for twenty-six years (1160-86 A.D.). Long before this the Seljuk Turks had begun to flood the Empire. Persia was for ever lost within ten years of Mahmūd's death. The home province of Ghazni and the Punjab were all that was left of the vast Empire. Finally, even in India, part of Mahmūd's possessions were lost through erosion, Hindu princes eating into them as much as they dared. But one thing is noteworthy, namely, that India proved the asylum to the House of Ghazni, from Masūd to Khusrū Malik, in all their troubles and misfortunes.

As stated before, Mahmūd had intended to divide his Empire between his two sons, Masūd and Muhammad. But before a year was out the strong arm of Masūd decided the fate of both his weaker brother and the Empire. Muhammad was blinded and imprisoned and Masūd ascended the throne with the blessings of the Caliph on whom he had bestowed enormous gifts. The new King of Ghazni appears to have been a Hercules in personal prowess, but in spite of his reputation for being a Rustam, he had to bow before the Seljuks in 1040 A.D., when Tughril Beg appropriated Persia by defeating him at Dandanakan near Merv. He made up for this reduction of the Empire, however, by maintaining a glorious court. Let us have a glimpse of it from the garrulous Baihaki whom we have mentioned before.

The Grandeur that was Ghazni :

'On Tuesday the 12th of Muharram the Amir went to the Firozi Garden and sat in the Green Pavilion on the Golden Plain. A sumptuous feast was ordered. The Amir Maudūd (Masūd's son) and the Minister came

and sat down, and the army passed in review before them. First passed the star of Amir Maudūd, the canopy, waving standards and two hundred slaves of the household with jackets of mail and spears, and many led horses and camels, and infantry with their banners displayed, and a hundred and seventy slaves fully armed and equipped with all their stars borne before them. After them came Irtigin the Chamberlain and his slaves to the number of eighty, and then fifty military slaves of the household, preceded by twenty officers finely accoutred, with many led horses and camels followed by other officers till all had passed.

'It was now near mid-day prayer, when the Amir bade his son and the Minister and the chief Chamberlain and the officers to sit down to the feast. He too sat down and ate bread. . . . The Amir said, "Let us begin without ceremony, for we have come into the country, and we will drink in the Firozi Garden." Accordingly much wine was brought immediately from the pavilion into the garden, and fifty goblets and flagons were placed in the middle of a small tent.

'The goblets were sent round and the Amir said, "Let us keep fair measure and fill the cups evenly, in order that there may be no unfairness." Each goblet contained nearly a pint. They began to get jolly and the minstrels sang. Bu-l-Hasan drank five goblets, his head was affected at the sixth, he lost his senses at the seventh, and began to vomit at the eighth, when the servants carried him off. Bu-l-Ala the physician dropped his head at the fifth cup, and he also was carried off. Khalil Daud drank ten ; Siyabiruz nine, and both were borne away to the hill of Dailaman. Bu-Naim drank twelve and ran away. Daud Maimandi fell down drunk, and the singers and buffoons all rolled off tipsy, when the Sultan and Khwājā Abdur Razak alone remained.

'When the Khwājā had drunk eighteen cups he made his obedience and prepared to go, saying to the Amir, "If you give your slave any more, he will lose his respect for your Majesty as well as his own wits." The Amir laughed and gave him leave to go, when he got up and departed in a most respectful manner.

'After this the Amir kept on drinking and enjoying himself. He drank twenty-seven full goblets of half a maund each (!). He then arose, called for a basin of water and his praying carpet, washed his face and read the mid-day prayers as well as the afternoon ones and so acquitted himself that you would have said he had not drunk a single cup. He then got on an elephant and returned to the palace.

'I witnessed the whole of this scene with mine own eyes.—I, Abu-l-Faḍl.'

Ghazni, under the rule of the Idol-breaker, had been transformed so as to take 'the first rank among the many stately cities of the Caliphate.' This Āli Bābā with his more than Forty Thieves had built therein his sumptuous mosque of marble and granite and called it the *Celestial Bride*. It was furnished with rich carpets, candelabras,

and other ornaments of silver and gold, and, according to Ferishta, possessed such beauty that it struck every beholder with astonishment. When the nobility saw the taste of the monarch they vied with one another in the magnificence of their private palaces as well as in the public buildings which they raised for the embellishment of the city. "Thus, in a short time, the capital was ornamented with mosques, porches, fountains, reservoirs, aqueducts, and cisterns, beyond every city in the East." Mahmūd's court, according to all accounts, vied with that of the Caliphs in solemnity as well as pomp and splendour; while he founded a university at Ghazni in which were collected rare and curious books in all languages. He also organized a museum of natural curiosities. For the maintenance of these vast establishments Mahmūd endowed a large sum out of which allowances were paid to professors and students. In short, he showed so much munificence to men of eminence and learning "that his capital exhibited a greater assemblage of literary genius than any other monarch in Asia had ever been able to produce." Such was the legacy which culminated in the convivial parties of Masūd. All these must be traced to the *Eldorado* India that had made possible the splendour and the luxury. Indian architects suggested some of the *motifs* that Indian artisans forcibly carried off to Ghazni executed for their Muslim masters; Indian captives that were taken in their thousands served to breed enervating habits among the restless and energetic Turks, Afghans, Arabs and Persians who formed the population of Ghazni; and lastly, Indian women abducted and enslaved also in large numbers sapped the vigour of their ravishers and contributed to their downfall. Such was the state of Mahmūd's successors when powerful rivals arose in another Afghan city, Ghor or Ghūr. The conflicts between these two cities reached a climax when, 1155 A.D., Alā-ud-dīn Husain of Ghor earned for himself the sobriquet of *Jahān-soz* or World-Burner by destroying Ghazni with fire and sword. This wave of hatred came with such fury that it deluged the beautiful capital of Mahmūd outdoing the atrocities committed by the Idol-breaker in all his life time. Men were slaughtered in their thousands, women and children were enslaved. "Of all the noble buildings with which the kings had enriched their stately capital hardly a stone was left to tell of its grandeur. The very graves of the hated dynasty were dug up and the royal bones scattered to the curs—but even Afghan vengeance spared the tomb of Mahmūd, the idol of Muslim soldiers. That tomb and

two lofty minarets, at a little distance from the modern town, alone stand to show that Ghazni was. On one of the minarets one may still read the resonant titles of the Idol-breaker, and on the marble tomb-stand an inscription entreats : *God's mercy for the great Amir Mahmūd.*"

SOME RELEVANT DATES

A.D.	
969	Separate Fatimite Caliphate set up at Cairo.
973-1048	Al-Biruni ; throws light on Hindu India.
993-4	Foundation of Delhi city.
1016	Canute King over England, Denmark and Norway.
1052-3	Great battle of Koppam between Cholas and Chālukyas.
1066	William the Conqueror in England.
1071	Revival of Islam under Seljuk Turks.
1076-1126	Chālukya Vikramāditya's campaigns ; commences Vikrama-Kāla (1076 A.D.).
1084	Sack of Rome by Robert Guiscard.
1089-1101	Tyranny of Harsha 'the Nero of Kashmir.'
1095	Pope Urban II summons first Crusade.
1096-1143	Siddh Rāj of Gujarat patronises Muslims and punishes Hindus in a quarrel at Cambay.
1112-55	Govindachandra, greatest Gaharwar ruler, defends Benares against Muslims. Kingdom extends from Kanauj to Patna.
1130	Vishnuvardhana Hoysala (patron of Rāmānujāchārya) sacks Kadamba capital, Banavāsi.
1130-99	Kākatiyas of Wārangal fight with Chola and Yādavas.
1147	The second Crusade.
1155	Alā-ud-dīn Ghūri (*Jahān-Soz*) destroys Ghazni.
1160-7	Bijjala Kālachuri usurps Chālukya throne. Foundation of the Lingāyet sect.
1169	Saladin Sultan in Egypt.
1182	Prithvirāja sacks Mahoba the Chāndel capital.
1186	End of the Ghaznavids.
1187	Jerusalem captured by Saladin. Yādavas become independent in the Deccan.
1189	The third Crusade.
1202	The fourth Crusade.
1206	Sultanate of Delhi founded by Aibak.
1214	Peking taken by Chingiz Khān.
1215	Magna Charta signed by King John.
1216-75	Pāndyas eclipse Cholas, Kākatiyas and Hoysalas.
1218	Chingiz Khān in Khwarizm.
1220-35	Hoysalas weaken Chola power.
1221-22	Chingiz Khān invades India. The fifth Crusade.
1227	Death of Chingiz Khān.

CHAPTER IV

SLAVES ENTHRONED

Makers of Muslim India :

The real founder of Muslim Power in India was Muhammad Ghūri the next invader (1175-1206 A.D.). The Arabs and the Turks had acted as pioneers and path-finders. They had cut the first stones for the edifice in conquering Sind, Multan and the Punjab. The foundations of lasting dominion for the Crescent had not been laid. That work was not even attempted by either Imād-ud-dīn or Mahmūd Ghazni. Such authority as had been created by Mahmūd and his successors in the Punjab, as we shall presently see, only served as a stepping-stone at the threshold for the Ghūrids to enter India. Once that was done the breakers of Ghazni became the makers of Muslim India.

Kutb-ud-dīn Aibak was not the first slave to sit on a throne. Mahmūd Ghazni's father Sabuktagin, among several others, had done it before him. But certainly Kutb-ud-dīn, the slave of Muhammad Ghūri, was the first to enjoy that privilege in India. As we shall witness in the following pages, he did more than fill the throne ; for he created the Muslim Sultanate of Delhi which in the fulness of time was to bear the amplest fruit. He was followed by two other great slaves, Iltutmish and Balban, who not merely lent an inglorious name to the first Muslim dynasty ruling from Delhi, but proved for all time that

> Rank's but the guinea stamp,
> Man's the gold for a'that.

The so-called Slave Kings held sovereign power in Hindustan during eighty years, from the death of Shihāb-ud-dīn Muhammad Ghūri (1206 A.D.) to the accession of Jalāl-ud-dīn Fīrūz Khaljī (1290 A.D.). This was the seed-time of Muslim empire in India. In the course of the next hundred years, under the successors of the Slaves,—Khaljīs (1290-1320 A.D.) and Tughlaks (1321-88 A.D.)—the flag of the Crescent waved over the greater part of India.

The Ghaznavid Legacy :

The Punjab had been regularly incorporated within his dominions by Mahmūd Ghazni. But Ariyaruk, the viceroy he had appointed at Lahore, having proved refractory, Masūd replaced him with another. Ahmad Niyāltagin, nick-named Mahmūd's '*sneeze*' (alter ego), on account of the great trust the late Sultan had placed in him, was the man chosen. As a measure of precaution Ahmad was put only in military charge of the Indian province, the civil administration being continued in the charge of Kāzi Shirāz. There was also an intelligence department established with a head 'to whom all orders from the Sultan and ministers were sent and who reported everything that occurred to his master.' To make assurance doubly sure, the new viceroy's son was detained at Ghazni as a hostage and the following strange message was sent to Niyāltagin by Khwājā Maimandi, the *vezīr* :—

'You two must not give trouble to the Court. What you have to write to me must be stated in detail in order to receive a distinct reply. His Majesty thinks it advisable to send with you some of the Dailami chiefs, to remove them to a distance from the Court, since they are foreigners ; and also some suspected persons and refractory slaves. Whenever you go on a campaign you must take them with you, but be careful that they do not mingle with the Army of Lahore, and let them not drink wine or play polo. Keep spies and informers to watch them, and never neglect this duty. These be the King's secret orders, not to be divulged.'

Odd as these arrangements might appear to us, the conduct of Niyāltagin fully justified them. Reports soon reached Ghazni of his ambitious designs. Anxious to emulate the exploits of Mahmūd, he led his army to Benares and plundered that holy city of the Hindus and returned to Lahore with enormous loot. This adventure in itself should not have been unwelcome to the authorities at home but for other indications of Niyāltagin's contumacious intentions. While he dispatched glowing reports of his success to Masūd no share of the spoils was sent to Ghazni. At the same time information was received of his recruitment in large numbers of the ruffians of Lahore with these appropriations and of his falsely declaring himself to be a son of Mahmūd. Before he could repudiate his allegiance to Masūd, therefore, it was necessary to take action. The task was entrusted to a Hindu general named Tilak.

The breaker of Hindu idols had entertained no prejudice against the recruitment of Hindu soldiers in his army. At all times under-

the Ghaznavids we come across references to Hindus freely participating in the wars of their conquerors. Only in a few cases mentioned before were they converted to Islam. According to Ferishta even unconverted chieftains like Siwand Rai, at the head of a considerable body of Hindu cavalry, were employed by Mahmūd. Low caste Hindus, especially, who could not find preferment in their own caste-ridden society, found under their Mlechcha masters endless avenues of advancement. Tilak was one such, for he was the son of a barber. Nevertheless, he had a handsome presence and a ready tongue ; besides he could write a beautiful hand, both in Hindi and Persian. In the alchemy of his amorous adventures he appears to have been an Alcibiades. In the *bon viveur* Masūd he found an appreciative master, who made him his private secretary and employed him as official interpreter in his dealings with the Hindus. 'As a mark of royal favour, he was granted a gold-embroidered robe, a jewelled necklace of gold, a canopy and an umbrella ; and kettle-drums were beaten, and ensigns with gilded tops were unfurled at his residence in accordance with Hindu fashion to proclaim his elevation to high official dignity.'

Though expediency and the personal levity of Masūd, rather than calculated and enlightened policy, were responsible for Tilak's exaltation, it is to be noted that it was the first instance of an unconverted infidel in India being so treated by the very son of that *Ghāzī* Mahmūd who had vowed *jihād* on the idolatrous Hindus. He was now being used to wage war on a 'friend of God' who had proved refractory.

In the middle of 1033 A.D., a year marked by a devastating famine and plague which, according to Ferishta, spread from Mesopotamia to India and depopulated whole districts, Tilak marched into Hindustan where fighting had already commenced between the partisans of the two Ghazni officers, Kāzi Shirāz and Ahmad Niyāltagin. The Hindu general defeated the latter in the very first engagement when the rebellious governor effected his escape from the field of battle. Tilak put a price of 500,000 *dirhams* on his head which was not long after brought in by the Jats. Encouraged by this success, Masūd himself led an expedition to Hānsi (11 miles east of Hisar) in person (1037 A.D.) to fulfil a vow he seemed to have taken long before. In the course of this exploit he was taken ill and repenting of his incontinent living, like Babur on a more famous occasion five centuries

later, publicly renounced wine and caused all the goblets to be flung into the Jhelum enjoining upon all his officers to take likewise a vow of abstention. The fortress, heroically defended and believed by the Hindus to have been impregnable, was nevertheless taken, followed by the usual slaughter, enslavement and plunder. The spoils were distributed among the troops. But with all this and the orgy of wine drinking in which Masūd indulged betimes, agreeing with the sentiments of one of his own court-poets who wrote :

> 'I do repent of wine and talk of wine,
> Of idols fair and chins like silver fine,
> A lip-repentance and a lustful heart,
> O God, forgive this penitence of mine'—

the campaign itself proved disastrous by what it occasioned. The Seljuks, taking advantage of his absence, invaded Ghazni territory and Masūd fled before them in 1040 A.D. towards Hindustan. His own men mutinied *en route*, took him captive and finally put him to death (1041 A.D.).

The unedifying history of Masūd's successors has been in part already told. Here we shall record only a few incidents relating to India. After Tilak defeated Niyāltagin, Masūd's second son Majdūd had been placed in charge of the Punjab (1036 A.D.). He was superseded by his cousin Nāmi, when Masūd himself was overthrown by his own brother Muhammad in whose favour the mutiny that ended Masūd's life had taken place (1041 A.D.). However, when Masūd's eldest son Maudūd was engaged in a deadly combat with his uncle Muhammad, Majdūd the younger brother of Maudūd was still active in the Punjab (1042 A.D.) He had captured the important town of Thānesar and was about to attack Delhi. In the meanwhile, the struggle for the throne in Ghazni having ended in favour of Maudūd, the latter turned his attention to the Punjab. Not content with getting rid of his defeated uncle's son Nāmi, he also felt suspicious of his own more energetic brother. But Majdūd died all on a sudden and left the Punjab in the undisputed possession of Maudūd, though he could command little authority there.

Two years later, Mahipāla, the Rāja of Delhi, recaptured without difficulty Hānsi, Thānesar and Kāngra, and threatened Lahore itself (1043-4 A.D.) which was saved by the alacrity of its defenders. This resulted in Maudūd placing the Punjab under the dual charge of his two sons, Mahmūd and Mansūr, besides dispatching against

the Hindus the energetic *Kotwal* of Ghazni, Bu'Ali Hasan. The last named, while yet on the threshold of his task, was recalled and put to death on account of some court intrigue. Then followed the death of Maudūd himself in 1049 A.D. This set in motion a series of succession disputes which distracted attention from India for ten years until the accession of Ibrāhim in 1059 A.D. The only incident worth recording during this interval is the appointment of the able officer Nūshtigin to the government of the Punjab (1049 A.D.). He recaptured the fortress of Kāngra and was about to restore order in his province when he was called home on account of the usurpation of Tughril (1052 A.D.).

Ibrāhim's reign, as we saw, was the longest in the dynasty (1059-99 A.D.). The comparative security of his kingdom during this period enabled him to turn his attention to India. In 1079 A.D. he crossed the southern border of the Punjab and took the towns of Ajudhan (Pāk Pātan) and Rūpāl. A reference to Ibrāhim having come upon a Parsi settlement on the western coast (Navsāri?) during this campaign makes it the more memorable. Ibrāhim was succeeded by his 23rd son, Masūd III, who ruled for seventeen years (1099-1115 A.D.). During this reign Tughātigin of Lahore is said to have led an expedition beyond the Ganges, though no details are recorded. Then followed another spate of family disputes, during which Arsalān Shāh, one of the occupants of the throne, sought refuge in India for a while; then returning home was shortly after put to death. He was followed by Bahrām Shāh in whose reign the destruction of Ghazni, already described, took place (1155 A.D.). But in our present context what is of greater interest is the rebellion of Bāhlim in the Punjab. This officer had been appointed governor of the province by Arsalān and refused to acknowledge Bahrām. Though defeated in 1119 A.D., he was reinstated and served to subdue many a turbulent Hindu chieftain on the borders of the Punjab. Bāhlim established himself at Nāgaur and once again turned contumacious. This time, being pursued by Bahrām, while attempting to escape, he was swallowed up in a quicksand, together with two of his sons, near Multan. "He deserves to be remembered," writes Sir Wolseley Haig, "because he established Muhammadan rule over provinces which had never acknowledged the authority of the greatest of the Ghaznavids. Nāgaur is situated more than 300 miles to the south of Lahore, and it is said that Bāhlim was accompanied, on his march against Bahrām, by ten

sons, each of whom ruled a province or district."

Bahrām, after the destruction of Ghazni by Alā-ud-dīn Ghūri, returned to his capital only once before his death as a fugitive on the borders of India in 1152 A.D. He was followed by his son Khusrū Shāh who, being expelled from Ghazni by the Turkmāns of Khurasan, fled to Lahore where he died in 1160 A.D. Khusrū Malik, the last descendant of the great Idol-breaker, ascended the throne at Lahore, the capital of his ancestors being permanently lost to the family. "He was a mild and voluptuous prince to whom authority was irksome. The governors of the districts of his small kingdom behaved as independent rulers, but he recked nothing so long as the means of indulgence was at hand." The districts fell off one after another from his allegiance until, in 1186 A.D., Muhammad Ghūri captured Lahore and sent Khusrū Malik and his son Bahrām to Fīrūz-Koh (Ghūr) where they were both put to death, after having been in prison for five years. Thus passed away the last of the line of Sa'buktagin and Mahmūd after two centuries of rule (977-1186 A.D.). They were masters of the Punjab from 1001-1186 A.D.

Third Muslim Invader :

Muhammad Ghūri was the third Muslim invader of India. He came to conquer and annex where his two predecessors, Imām-ud-dīn and Mahmūd, had come primarily to punish and plunder. He was the nephew of the Ghūrid destroyer of Ghazni, Alā-ud-dīn. He and his brother Ghiyās-ud-dīn ruled respectively at Ghazni (since 1173-4 A.D.) and Ghor or Fīrūz-Koh (from 1163 A.D.). Unlike the late dynasty of Ghazni, that of Ghor appears to have been Afghan, though some believe they might have been Turki or Persian as well. While the elder brother, Ghiyās-ud-dīn, was content with the western dominions of his ancestors, the younger, Muiz-ud-dīn (also called Shihāb-ud-dīn) Muhammad, with Ghazni as his base, turned his ambitious eyes towards twice conquered Hindustan.

The three Muslim provinces of Sind, Multan and the Punjab were the first to be subdued. Multan was taken in 1175 A.D., Sind down to the sea in 1182 A.D., and Lahore, as we saw, fell in 1186 A.D. During the remaining twenty years of his life (1186-1206 A.D.) Muhammad carved out an Empire for himself, extending from Ghazni in the west to Gaur in the east, though he left no heirs of his body to rule it after him. That fortune descended to his slaves.

Thirty Years of War :

Muhammad Ghūri did not make as promising a beginning as the Idol-breaker nearly two hundred years earlier. His ultimate conquests in Hindustan were also due as much to the courage and enterprise of his slaves as to his own. Though he was successful in his Indian expedition, led against the heretical Muslim ruler of Multan in 1175 A.D., he had to make good his position by low stratagem rather than by open prowess in arms. At Uch, for example, he intrigued with the Bhatti Rāja's wife, promising to place her at the head of his *harem*, and got rid of her unloved husband by murder. Finally the unfaithful lady was left in the lurch. In 1178 A.D. Muhammad was driven back with heavy losses when he attempted to take Anhilwārā, the Vāghela capital of Gujarat. Next year he wrenched Peshawar from the feeble hands of the Ghaznavid Khusrū Malik's governor, and appeared before Lahore itself in 1181 A.D., which he finally took in 1186 A.D. Here too Muhammad had recourse to measures which must stand condemned for ever in the land of the noble chivalry of Rājasthān. Khusrū Malik was compelled to surrender his son as a hostage. Then Muhammad proceeded to Sialkot where he built a fortress. Khusrū Malik attempted to take this when his adversary turned his back. So in 1186 Muhammad once more came to Lahore. When Khusrū sued for peace he pretended to release Khusrū's son who had been taken as a hostage on the previous occasion. The credulous Khusrū, being assured of his safety, came out to receive his son. Then treacherously Muhammad seized him and sent both him and his son to their doom in Fīrūz-Koh as stated before.

Lurid light is thrown on the state of affairs in the Punjab at this time by an incident which is likely to be passed over by historians. The Rājas of Jammu were in perpetual strife with the Ghaznavid rulers of Lahore. But the valiant Khokārs who had once fought against Mahmūd were now won over by Khusrū Malik from their allegiance to Rāja Chakra Deo of Jammu. The latter, like the Lodi chieftain who invited Babur in later years, called in Muhammad Ghūri who swallowed all, Hindu and Muslim alike, in one common subjection. In spite of such native assistance, however, Muhammad could progress little beyond capturing stray fortresses like Bhātinda or Sirhind which he took in the winter of 1190-91 A.D. But this brought him into opposition with his most formidable antagonist in

India, Prithvirāja Chauhān, ruler of Delhi and Ajmer. In an encounter which took place at Tarāori (Tarāin, 14 miles from Thānesar), in 1191 A.D. Muhammad was severely wounded, and routed for a second time by an infidel prince. Rāi Pithaura, as Muslim writers called him, pursued the Ghūri army for 40 miles and then turned to the fortress of Sirhind, which also capitulated after a prolonged siege of thirteen months.

Smarting under the humiliation of the first battle of Tarāin Muhammad, it is related, 'never slumbered in ease nor waked but in sorrow and anxiety.' To retrieve his position he made very thorough and elaborate preparations and returned to the fray the very next year (1192 A.D.). The Hindus also anticipating this were not slow to meet the enemy. 300,000 horse and 3000 elephants besides a very large infantry gathered under 150 princes of Hindustan (excepting Jayachandra of Kanauj, Prithvi's father-in-law and deadliest foe) on the hallowed field of Tarāin (wrongly called Narain in the following account of Minhāj-us-Sirāj). In the words of the Muslim historian :

'Next year the Sultan assembled another army and advanced to Hindustan, to avenge his defeat. 'A trustworthy person named Muin-ud-din, one of the principal men of the hills of Tolak, informed me that he was in this army, and that its force amounted to 120,000 horsemen bearing armour. Before the Sultan could arrive the fort of Sirhind had capitulated, and the enemy were encamped in the vicinity of Narain (Tarāin). The Sultan drew up in battle array, leaving his main body in the rear, with the banners, canopies, and elephants, to the number of several divisions. His plan of attack being formed, he advanced quietly. The light unarmoured horsemen were made into four divisions of 10,000, and were directed to advance and harass the enemy on all sides, on the right and on the left, in the front and in the rear, with their arrows. When the enemy collected his forces to attack, they were to support each other, and to charge at full speed. By these tactics the infidels were worsted, the Almighty gave us the victory over them, and they fled.

'Pithaura alighted from his elephant, mounted a horse, and galloped off, but he was captured near Sarsuti, and *sent to hell.* Govind Rai of Delhi was killed in the battle, and the Sultan recognised his head by the two teeth which he had broken. *The capital, Ajmer, and all the Siwalik hills, Hansi, Sarsuti, and other districts were the results of this victory* which was gained in the year 588 H.' (1192 A.D.).

As Smith very correctly points out, "the second battle of Tarāin in 1192 may be regarded as the decisive contest which ensured the ultimate success of the Muhammadan attack on Hindostan. All the numerous subsequent victories were merely consequences of the over-

whelming defeat of the Hindu league on the historic plain to the north of Delhi."

Kutb-ud-dīn Aibak conquered Meerut and Koil, and made Delhi the seat of the government which was entrusted to him. The ruthlessness of the conqueror may be estimated from his indiscriminate slaughter of the people in the conquered cities which were also plundered and destroyed. In Ajmer, for instance, the idol temples were demolished to their very foundations, and mosques and colleges were built, where 'the precepts of Islam, and the customs of the law were divulged and established.' After this, 'on a promise of a punctual payment of a large tribute, he delivered over the country of Ajmer to Golā, a natural son of Prithvirāja.'

The fate of Prithvi soon overtook Jayachandra of Kanauj who had held aloof and chuckled over the destruction of his son-in-law for the crime of eloping with his not unwilling daughter. We pointed out the political importance of Kanauj in an earlier context. The Muslim conquerors were not blind to its significance. Mahmūd Ghazni had not missed it. 'There were Muslims in that country,' writes Ibn-al-Athir, 'since the days of Mahmūd ibn Sabuktigin who continued faithful to the law of Islam and constant in prayer and good works.' The same writer speaks of Jayachandra as the King of Benares and describes him as the greatest king of India, possessing the largest territory. Such a monarch could not be suffered to remain if Hindustan was to be subdued. So Muhammad marched against him in 1194 and the Rāthod fell like the Chauhān. 'When the two armies met there was great carnage ; *the infidels sustained by their numbers and the Muslims by their courage* ; but in the end the infidels fled and the faithful were victorious. The slaughter of the Hindus was immense ; none was spared, except women and children, and the carnage of the men went on until the earth was weary.' Jayachandra met his fate like Harold at the battle of Hastings (1066 A.D.) being struck in the eye by a fatal arrow. The same result followed : like William the conqueror in England, Muhammad became king of Hindustan. But he had his Normandy in Afghanistan which interested him more than his new conquests ; wherefore he left Hindustan more and more in the hands of his barons the Turki slaves. 'After the flight of the Hindus, Shihāb-ud-dīn entered Benares and carried off its treasures upon 1400 camels. He then returned to Ghazni.' Continuing, Ibn-al-Athir records with wonder,

'Among the elephants which were captured there was a white one. A person who saw it told me that when the elephants were brought before Shihab-ud-din and were ordered to salute, they all saluted except the white one!'

The fall of Jayachandra at Chandwār made Muhammad the master of the political as well as the religious capitals of Hindustan, Kanauj and Benares. There was little more to be done which would add to his prestige, and therefore after capturing Bayāna and receiving submission from Gwalior, that 'pearl of the necklace of the castles of Hind' (1196 A.D.), Muhammad turned his attention towards the north and west of his capital. During the next five years the two Ghūri brothers (Muhammad and Ghiyās-ud-dīn) had so much fighting to do against the Turks on their Persian frontiers that Muhammad had little leisure to spare for India, and "the northern provinces enjoyed a period of comparative repose, welcome to the troops after nine years' warfare, and beneficial to the country." Only, there was a rebellion at Ajmer fomented by the ruler of Anhilwārā which was promptly attended to by Aibak. A Muslim governor was placed over Pithaura's natural son who had been left in possession of Ajmer in 1192 A.D. Hemrāj the defeated rebel (a brother of Prithvirāja) perished on a pyre like Jayapāla, in 1194. Aibak led two expeditions against Rāja Bhīm of Anhilwārā; one in 1195 and another in 1197. On the former occasion he defeated and slew Kumār Pāla the commander of the army and looted Anhilwārā, thus avenging Muhammad's defeat in 1182. On the latter occasion he inflicted a more crushing defeat on Rāja Bhīm, when 15,000 men were slain and 20,000 taken captive, besides several elephants and much other booty. Anhilwārā was again devastated.

Another of Aibak's glorious exploits in the absence of his master was the reduction of the Chāndels of Central India. Their capital, Mahoba, was taken and the famous fortress of Kālinjar captured after a siege; 50,000 captives, male and female, were carried off as slaves together with enormous treasures; the temples were converted into mosques.

The Crescent Moves East:

When Aibak was busy in the heart of Hindustan, another soldier of fortune, also a Turki slave, was engaged in reducing the eastern provinces of Bihar and Bengal for Muhammad Ghūri. This was

Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn Muhammad, son of Bakhtiyar Khaljī, a curious specimen of the *genus homo* with his arms reaching up to the calves of his legs while standing erect. With these long arms he reached the easternmost parts of northern India. About 1197 he conquered Bihar and destroyed the last vestiges of Buddhism in that province, as the Arabs had done in Sind during the eighth century A.D. Then he proceeded into Bengal which fell in 1199 A.D. Let us listen to the familiar legend as told by Minhāj-us-Sirāj in the *Tabakāt-i-Nāsiri* :—

When Muhammad ibn Bakhtyar 'came back from his visit to Sultan; (?) Kutb-ud-din and conquered Bihar, his fame reached the ears of Rai Lakshmaniya (Lakshmana Sena of Bengal) and spread throughout all parts of the Rai's dominions. . . .Next year Muhammad ibn Bakhtyar prepared an army and marched from Bihar. He suddenly appeared before the city of Nudiya (Lakhnauti, Odantapuri) with only eighteen horsemen ; the remainder of his army was left to follow. . . .The people rather thought that he was a merchant who had brought horses for sale. In this manner he reached the gate of Rai Lakhmaniya's palace, when he drew his sword and commenced the attack. At this time the Rai was at his dinner, and golden and silver dishes filled with food were placed before him according to the usual custom. All of a sudden a cry was raised at the gate of his palace and in the city. Before he had ascertained what had occurred, Muhammad ibn Bakhtyar had rushed into the palace and put a number of men to the sword. The Rai fled barefooted by the rear of the palace, and his whole treasure and all his wives, maid servants, attendants and women fell into the hands of the invader. Numerous elephants were taken and such booty was obtained by the Muhammadans as is beyond all compute. When his army arrived the whole city was brought under subjection and he fixed his headquarters there.'

Death of Shihāb-ud-dīn :

When the work of consolidation and extension of his conquests was being thus carried on by his slaves, Muhammad Ghūri was, as we saw, busy fighting the Turks in his brother's dominions. The history of the Ghaznavids was to repeat itself. Muhammad was routed by the Turks at Andkhūī in 1205 A.D., "a defeat which dealt a fatal blow at his military reputation in India." Rumours even spread in this country that the Sultan was killed. The Khokārs on the frontier were the first to be affected by this news. They rose in revolt and under their leader, Rāi Sāl, they defeated the deputy governor of Multan, plundered Lahore, and blocked the strategic road between the Punjab and Ghazni. Aibak's efforts having proved unequal to the

task in the face of persistent reports of Muhammad's death, the Sultan found it necessary to come in person. At the close of 1205 A.D. the combined forces of Muhammad and Aibak inflicted a crushing defeat on the Khokārs between the Jhelum and the Chenab. Besides slaughtering the enemy in large numbers, so many of them were captured alive that five Khokār slaves were sold for a *dinār* in the camp. The victorious Sultan arrived in Lahore on 25 February 1206 A. D. and made arrangements for returning to Ghazni in order to resume his struggle against the Turks. But, unfortunately, on his way back, he was assassinated on the banks of the Indus by unknown hands—some say by the Chauhān Pithaura who was still alive, but this is *prima facie* absurd ; others attribute it to the Ismaili heretics or more plausibly to the infuriated Khokārs. The body of the murdered Sultan was carried to Ghazni and buried in his capital. The same year (1206 A.D.) another Muhammad also died at the eastern end of his vast empire of Hindustan. Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn, not content with his conquests of Bihar and Bengal was lured by the frontier tribes into attempting the impossible. As we mentioned while dealing with the history of Assam (Ch. I), the Muslims tried to penetrate Tibet through the frontiers of Kāmrūp and perished in the adventure. In the opinion of Sir Wolseley Haig, "This was the greatest disaster which had yet befallen the Muslim arms in India. Armies had been defeated, but Ikhtiyār-ud-din's force had been all but annihilated." Even the long arms of Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn Muhammad could not reach over the Himalayas, and he died disgraced in Lakhnauti, all but the sole survivor of the disastrous expedition. According to some authorities he was murdered by a Khaljī kinsman named Āli Mardān.

Two princes of the Ghūri family sat on the throne of Ghazni in quick succession, after Muhammad's death. But the real rulers of his empire were the four Turki slaves who had been placed in charge of the provinces while he was yet alive. Yildiz in Ghazni, Kubāchā in Multan, Aibak in Delhi, and Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn in Lakhnauti, would have ruled independently of each other, but for the masterful command of Aibak. Besides, Mahmūd, Shihāb-ud-dīn's successor at Ghazni, had sent him 'all the insignia of royalty,' as Ferishta states, 'a throne, a canopy, standards, drums, and the title of king (Sultan ?), being desirous of securing his interest, and being by no means able to oppose his power, if he refused to acknowledge him.'

Kubāchā was Aibak's son-in-law and gave the new sovereign of

Hindustan no trouble. Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn died in the subordinate position he had always acknowledged to Aibak. Āli Mardān, Ikhtiyār's alleged murderer, by force and guile succeeded as governor in the eastern provinces. But Yildiz alone challenged Aibak's sovereignty. In 1208 A.D. he descended from Ghazni and captured Multan. However, Aibak drove him back and retaliated by taking Ghazni itself. Elated by this success Aibak over-reached himself. His troops treated the citizens of the Imperial capital like those of any other conquered city, while Aibak regaled himself with copious wine. The people of Ghazni disgusted by these orgies called in Yildiz once again, and the first Slave king of Delhi precipitously withdrew to his own legitimate dominion. Early in November, 1210 A.D., falling from his horse while playing *Chaugān* (polo), Kutb-ud-dīn Aibak 'flew to heaven,' to use Babur's phrase describing the death of his own father.

The Slave Dynasty :

Compared with Mahmūd, Lane-Poole has remarked, the name of Muhammad Ghūri has remained obscure. "Yet his conquests in Hindustan were wider and far more permanent than Mahmūd's." Though a larger part of these conquests was partial, and there were still revolts to be crushed and chiefs to be subdued, 'from the days of Muhammad Ghūri to the catastrophe of the Indian Mutiny there was always a Muhammadan king upon the throne of Delhi.' As pointed out before, the credit of this achievement is due as much to Muhammad Ghūri's slaves as to his own initiative. Among these Aibak must rank with Babur as pioneer-founder of a great dynasty of rulers. Some of his successors might have added more glory to the empire as a whole, but the ground-work and example were Aibak's.

In the estimation of contemporary Muslim chroniclers, Aibak always acted 'in the ways of justice' and 'the people were happy.' The roads were freed from robbers and the Hindus both 'high and low were treated with royal benignity.' This, of course, did not preclude Aibak following the routine of Muslim conquerors in India, namely, enslaving, converting, destroying and looting as well as building mosques out of the ruins of Hindu temples. All this had become part of the military ritual of Islam. It followed as a matter of course in the wake of war. But once the 'collar of slavery' was fastened on the necks of the infidels taken in *jihād* the rest were rarely

interfered with provided they paid the *jizya.* His munificence earned for Aibak the name of *Lākh-bakhsh* or 'Giver of lacs.' At Delhi he built the great Jāmi Masjid and possibly began the construction of the Kutb Minār, completed by his successor Iltutmish. In short, he was a 'fighter in the way of God.' : he filled the realm with 'friends' and cleared it of 'foes' : 'His bounty was continuous, and so was his slaughter.'

After Aibak :

After Aibak, the first Slave king of Delhi (1206-10 A.D.), the 'dynasty' ruled over Hindustan for eighty years (1210-90 A. D.). There were only two outstanding figures during this period who made distinctive contribution to the crystallisation of Crescentdom in India. They were Shams-ud-dīn Iltutmish (1210-35 A.D.) and Ghiyās-ud-dīn Balban (1266-87 A.D.). Besides these, there were seven other members of the 'dynasty' who sat on the throne of Delhi, though they cannot be described as having truly ruled. One of them, indeed, reigned as many as twenty years (Mahmūd Nāsir-ud-dīn, 1246-66 A.D.), but even under him the power behind the throne was Balban. Of the remaining six, with the singular exception of Sultānā Rāziyat-ud-dīn (1236-40 A.D.)—the only Muslim Queen who reigned of her own right at Delhi—all others were *rois fainéant.* The character of this period cannot be better described than in the vivid words of Ziā-ud-dīn Baranī who writes :

> 'During the thirty years from the death of Shams-ud-dīn (1236-66 A.D.), the incompetency of that monarch's sons and the overweening power of the *Shamsi* slaves had produced a vacillating, disobedient, self-willed feeling among the people, which watched for and seized upon every opportunity. Fear of the governing power, which is the basis of all good government, and the source of the glory and splendour of states, had departed from the hearts of all men, and the country had fallen into a wretched condition.'

This was the outcome of not merely the political incompetency of the puppet princes who became pawns in the hands of ambitious adventurers at the capital, but also the result of rebellions in the provinces, both by the Hindus and the Muslim governors who sought to found independent dynasties of their own. It could not be otherwise during the age when power rested solely with those who had the strength to wield it. The Slaves came to rule not by hereditary or any other legal claim, but by the primal law of natural selection.

As Lane-Poole has well observed, "While a brilliant ruler's son is apt to be a failure, the slaves of a real leader of men have often proved the equals of their master....the son is a mere speculation. He may or may not inherit his father's talents ; even if he does, the very success and power of the father create an atmosphere of luxury that does not encourage effort....On the other hand the slave is 'the survival of the fittest' ; he is chosen for mental and physical abilities, and he can hope to retain his position, in his master's favour only by vigilant effort and hard service. Should he be found wanting his fate is sealed. Both Iltutmish and Balban were tyrants of the Greek type. They took opportunity by the forelock and established their dictatorships.

Evolving Order out of Chaos :

An abortive experiment was made on the death of Aibak to create a hereditary monarchy. But Aibak's son Ārām (a very significant name) proved a total failure. 'For the sake of restraining tumult, for the tranquillity of the commonalty and the content of the hearts of the soldiery', a more competent person was necessary. He was found in Iltutmish, the governor of Badāun, slave and son-in-law of Kutb-ud-dīn Aibak.

The task to which Iltutmish had been summoned (1211 A.D.) was by no means an easy one. Aibak had hardly made his authority felt over Hindustan when he suddenly died of an accident. Yildiz had recovered his sovereignty in Ghazni, and Kubāchā who had yielded to Aibak was not likely to submit to another slave. Bengal had been made to feel the weight of Aibak's personal authority, but its Khaljī governor, Āli Mardān Khān was in no mood to acquiesce in his successors' domination. Both east and west, therefore, the new Sultan of Delhi had to re-establish the power and prestige of his throne. Iltutmish was not unequal to this task. Before his death in 1235 A. D. he not merely succeeded in making himself master over his inheritance, but also rounded off the kingdom of Delhi by fresh conquests. Yildiz was defeated near the historic plain of Tarāin (1215 A.D.), taken prisoner and finally put to death ; Kubāchā was nominally subdued in 1217 A. D. but continued in the charge of his province (Sind, Multan and west Punjab) until 1227 A.D. when his career was cut short by being drowned in the Indus. He was a thorn in the side of Iltutmish so long as he was alive.

Great trouble was caused in the eastern provinces of Bihar and Bengal by the intractable Khaljīs. On hearing of Aibak's death the erratic Āli Mardān Khān had declared himself independent with the title of Alā-ud-dīn. "To his own subjects he was a ruthless and bloody tyrant, and the Hindu rulers on his borders stood in such awe of him that the tribute with which they conciliated him filled his treasury." Within two years he earned a tyrant's death by such conduct. Iwāz who succeeded Āli Mardān tried to walk in his footsteps but submitted to Iltutmish in 1222 A.D. when Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd (Iltutmish's son) was appointed governor of Oudh, with another governor over Bihar. In spite of this, however, Iwāz once again rebelled in 1227 A.D., but was defeated and put to death by Mahmūd who occupied Lakhnauti and even won a victory over Britu, king of Kāmrūp (?). When Mahmūd died, in 1229 A.D., Balkā, a son of Iwāz, proclaimed himself king with the high-sounding title Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn Daulat Shāh Balkā. Iltutmish marched against him, in 1230-31 A.D., and putting him to death, appointed Alā-ud-dīn Jānī governor of Bengal.

While returning from Bengal, Iltutmish put down (1232 A. D.) the recalcitrant Mangal Bhava Deva of Gwalior who had recovered his independence during the easy interlude of Ārām Shāh's régime. Then he invaded Mālwa, captured the fortresses of Bhilsa and Mandu and justified his title of Shams-ud-dīn ('Sun of the True Faith') by destroying and looting the ancient temple of Mahākāli in Vikramāditya's Ujjaini (1234 A.D.). Iltutmish did not long survive this campaign. An attempt was made on his life at Delhi by the fanatical sect of the Mulāhids; but Iltutmish died of an illness in his bed in 1236 A.D.

The Mongolian Maelstrom :

Perhaps the greatest danger to which Hindustan had been exposed for years was that of the Mongols. They were Central Asian nomadic hordes which had been for a time welded into the greatest empire ever established by a single conqueror. Under the famous Chingiz (Jingiz) Khān, 1155-1227 A.D., they dominated over Tartary, China, and the Caspian Sea. India just escaped this Mongolian Maelstrom, though the barbarian flood broke on our frontiers, depositing its flotsam and jetsam in western Punjab. Jalāl-ud-dīn, the Shāh of Khwarizm being driven out of Transoxiana, fell back on Afghanistan and

western Punjab seeking assistance from Iltutmish. But the discreet Sultan of Delhi, dreading the consequences, desisted. The desperate Shāh, being brought to bay, played havoc in the territories ruled over by Kubāchā. He was hotly pursued by Chingiz Khān and his uncouth barbarians who, however, found India too warm to attract them. Nevertheless, the Mongols continued to pester the Punjab for a generation or two until they were finally converted and absorbed into Muhammadan society. In their unregenerate form they were utter barbarians with a voice that rumbled like 'thunder in the mountains,' and hands that were powerful : like bears' paws,' able to 'break a man in two, as easily as an arrow may be broken.' Each of them would eat a sheep a day, and drink enormous quantities of *kumis* or fermented mare's milk ; and lie naked before immense braziers in winter, 'heedless of the cinders and sparks that fell on his body,' taking them for mere flea-bites. They treated the Muslims as the latter did the Hindus, burning, destroying and plundering their mosques and sacred things. They massacred men, women and children indiscriminately, and even disembowelled them to discover if they had swallowed any jewels. The poet Amir Khusrau describes touchingly how he suffered at their hands when once he had been taken captive by one of them.

'The Muslim martyrs,' he says, 'dyed the desert with their blood, while the Muslim captives had their necks tied together like so many flowers into garlands. I was also taken prisoner, and from fear that they would shed my blood, not a drop of blood remained in my veins. I ran about like water, here and there with innumerable blisters on my feet like bubbles on the surface of a stream. My tongue was parched and dry from excessive thirst and my stomach seemed to have collapsed for want of food. They left me nude like a leafless tree in winter or a flower that has been much lacerated by thorns. My Mongol captor sat on a horse like a lion bestriding the spur of a mountain ; a disgusting stench came out of his mouth, etc., and on his chin there grew, like a hyacinth, a tuft of hair. If through weakness I lagged a little behind, he would threaten me sometimes with his frying pan and sometimes with his spear. I sighed and thought that release from such a situation was quite impossible. But, thank God, I did regain my freedom without my breast being pierced by an arrow or my body cut into two by the sword.'

'Aid of the Commander of the Faithful' :

Iltutmish reigned just over a quarter century (1211-36 A.D.). His great predecessor Aibak had been created Sultan by his lawful sovereign at Ghazni in 1206 A.D. During the four

years of Aibak's rule as Sultan the kingdom of Delhi was yet in an embryonic state. Aibak's sudden death, as we saw, threatened it with dissolution. It was Iltutmish who rescued it from that fate. He resuscitated the Sultanate of Delhi and left it an integrated empire to his successors. The impression he created on his contemporaries may be inferred from the fact that the Caliph of Bagdad invested him with the title 'Aid of the Commander of the Faithful.' It is for this reason that Iltutmish has been considered the real founder of the kingdom of Delhi, though it is too much of an exaggeration to call him "the greatest of all the Slave Kings," as Sir Wolseley Haig has done. That title must be spared for Ghiyās-ud-dīn Balban. To say this is not to under-rate Iltutmish. He did the very necessary work of consolidation. Besides, he acquired the moral prestige in the Islamic world that the Caliph's recognition undoubtedly gave him. He built or carried forward to its completion the great *Minār* of Kutb-ud-dīn. [The name is attributed to the saint Khwāja Kutb-ud-dīn Bakhtiyār Kāki of Ūsh, who was greatly honoured by Iltutmish and died in Delhi on 7 Dec. 1235. The wide-spread belief that it must have been commenced by Aibak is due both to its name and an inscription on the monument itself. Its fifth and last storey is ascribed to Sultan Fīrūz Tughlak.] It was erected in 1231 A.D. and is considered the tallest minaret in the world (about 242 ft. high). "Its boldly jutting balconies, alternate angular and rounded fluting, and fine Arabic inscriptions set off the natural contrasts of white marble and red sandstone of which it is built." Iltutmish was also the first to reform Muslim coinage in India. Before him there were the small native billons, with the bull on one side and a horseman on the other, and inscribed often in both Nāgarī and Arabic. Iltutmish introduced the broad silver *tankā* ('the ancestor of the rupee, weighing 175 grains') with only Arabic inscription.

A Decade of Decadence :

From the death of Iltutmish to the accession of Nāsir-ud-dīn was a decade of decadence for Delhi (1236-46 A.D.). This was the second of the chaotic interludes that were to follow their inexorable periodicity during five centuries and more, in the absence of an accepted law of peaceful succession. After the death of prince Mahmūd who was governor at Lakhnauti, Iltutmish, being disappointed in his other sons, had designated his daughter Rāziya heiress-apparent ; but, in

spite of her exceptional abilities, it was more than apparent that succession would be disputed.

Minhāj-us-Sirāj, a contemporary historian, tells us how Rāziya was both peculiarly qualified and disqualified. 'She was,' he says 'endowed with all qualities befitting a king ; but she was not born of the right sex, and so in the estimation of men all these virtues were worthless. [May God have mercy on her !]. In the time of her father she had exercised authority with great dignity. Her mother was the chief wife of His Majesty, and she resided in the chief royal palace in Kushk-i-Fīrūzi. The Sultan discerned in her countenance the signs of power and bravery, and although she was a girl and lived in retirement, yet when the Sultan returned from the conquest of Gwalior (1232 A.D.), he directed his secretary, who was director of the government, to put her name in writing as heir of the kingdom and successor to the throne.' To the objections raised by orthodoxy the king is said to have replied, "My sons are devoted to the pleasures of youth, and no one of them is qualified to be king. They are unfit to rule the country, and after my death you will find that there is no one more competent to guide the state than my daughter." Minhāj-us-Sirāj adds confidently, 'It was afterwards agreed by common consent that the king had judged wisely.'

But in an age of 'blood and iron' war was the only instrument of justice. The nobility would not acquiesce in the preposterous nomination of the late Sultan without the ordeal of battle. So they raised Rukn-ud-dīn, a brother of Rāziya, to the throne. Then followed revolution and counter-revolution whose sanguinary details are absolutely unedifying. The governors of Oudh, Badāun, Hānsi, Multan and Lahore were openly in revolt. Even Muhammad Junaidi, the *vezir* of the kingdom, would not acknowledge the heiress-designate. But Rāziya soon vindicated her father's selection by force of arms. She donned the clothes of men, 'put on the war paint like Hiawatha,' and rode to battle like Chāndbībi in after days. For a while she seemed to succeed, and 'from Lakhnauti to Debal all the *maliks* and *amirs* tendered obedience and submission' to her. She attended open Court and transacted all the business of state ignoring her sex. She demonstrated, as the chronicler has described her, that she was 'a great monarch.' 'She was wise, just and generous, a benefactor to her kingdom, a dispenser of justice, the protector of her subjects, and the leader of her armies.' But this was too much for a woman to undertake in the thirteenth century A.D. Her rivals were soon upon her, especially 'the Forty' who were a powerful body of Turkish slaves at the Court. At their instigation Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn Altūniya,

governor of Bhātinda, rebelled. The rock of offence was Sultānā Rāziya's Abyssinian favourite Yākūt (who played the Earl of Essex to this Queen Elizabeth). When Rāziya marched against Bhātinda accompanied by her favourite, the latter was assassinated and the Queen imprisoned. But the astute and romantic Rāziya seduced and captivated her captor, Altūniya, and she married him as the price of her liberty. They both then marched to Delhi to recover the lost authority. In the meanwhile, 'the Forty' had raised Rāziya's half-brother Bahrām to the throne. "There can be no doubt," according to Haig, "that the throne itself would ordinarily have been the prize of one of the Forty had not the jealousies of all prevented them from yielding preference to one. The Sultānā and her consort were again defeated and on the following day they were both murdered by the Hindus whom they had summoned to their assistance (14 Oct. 1240 A.D.). Thus ended the second experiment at Delhi to settle the succession by the choice of the Sultan. (The first was the failure of Aibak's son and successor Ārām Shāh.)

From Bahrām to Balban :

The next six years (1240-46 A.D.,) were full of turmoil. Bahrām, 'fearless, full of courage and sanguinary,' was himself assassinated by the king-makers within two years, and another puppet was found in Alā-ud-dīn Masūd, a grandson of Iltutmish. The latter too made his way to prison and death through the familiar path of tyranny and debauch (1242-46 A.D.). Disorders spread through the country. The Sultan all but lost Bihar and Bengal in the east, and Sind and Multan in the west, while the upper Punjab was wasted by the Mongols and occupied by the Khokārs. In the midst of this turmoil the debauched Masūd was deposed and his abstemious and pious uncle, Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd, was raised to the throne. This prince ruled for twenty years, 1246-66 A.D. The virtual ruler, the power behind the throne during this period, as stated before, was Balban. He was a Turki slave whom Iltutmish had purchased in Delhi after his Gwalior campaign (1232 A.D.). He was Sultānā Rāziya's chief huntsman. Under Bahrām and Masūd he had risen to be Lord Chamberlain and acquired the fiefs of Rewāri and Hānsi. Later he was entitled Ulugh Khān ('puissant lord') and gave his daughter in marriage to the Sultan Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd. He wielded such power and acquired such prestige as chief minister during the twenty years of the latter's

reign that he was designated his successor by Nāsir-ud-dīn and ascended the throne as a matter of course in 1266 A.D.

The personal history of Nāsir-ud-dīn could be briefly told. He continued to reign so long because he was too much pre-occupied with his own devotions to meddle with the government of Ulugh Khān. ' The steed of rule ' was under the latter's ' bridle.' Many legends have grown round the name of the pious and amiable Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd. " The truth seems to be that the young king possessed the virtues of continence, frugality and practical piety, rare among his kind, and had a taste in calligraphy which led him to employ his leisure in copying the *Koran*, and that these merits earned for him exaggerated praise." Balban was dictator in all affairs of the state, except during a very short interlude.

Balban's Dictatorship :

' The falcon of dominion and power ' being thus ' placed upon his sacred wrist,' Balban dominated Hindustan during forty years, from 1246-86 A.D. During half this time he was chief minister and for the rest sovereign Sultan. Already in 1245 A.D., he had earned a reputation for himself by driving the Mongols hip and thigh out of India after defeating them at Uch. His task was a threefold one : (1) to keep the Mongols away ; (2) to repress rebellious and scheming Muslim rivals ; and (3) to put down Hindu revolts. In all these he eminently succeeded.

The refractory Hindu Rājas were the first to feel the weight of Balban's arms. The fortress of Talsanda in Kanauj territory was captured after much fighting, in 1246 A.D. Then the country between Kara and Kālinjar was subdued. And finally, Rantambhor and Mewat were ravaged (1248 A.D.). The Hindus in the last named territory were the most difficult to repress, and they carried on their depredations against the Musalmans, off and on, for a long time. Ulugh Khān, before he became Sultan, led his last expedition against them in 1259 A.D. Then he gave vent to all the ferocity for which his reign was well known. Nearly 12,000 infidels were slaughtered indiscriminately ; 250 of their leaders were made to feel the chains of bondage ; and enormous booty including 21,00,000 *tankās* was brought to Delhi. Gwalior, Chanderi, Mālwa and Narwar had already been likewise treated in 1251-52 A.D.

A conspiracy was formed between Ulugh Khān's Muslim rivals to

over-throw the all too powerful minister. In 1253 A. D. they succeeded in winning over the credulous Sultan to their side. Balban was for the time being exiled to his fiefs of Rewāri and Hānsi, and his place, as chief minister, was usurped by the head of the conspirators, a Hindu convert named Raihan. This eclipse, however, did not continue for more than a year. Jealousy among Raihan's own followers, and the opposition of the Turki nobility, led to a powerful combination against the usurper. A formidable army of the *amirs* and *maliks* from all parts of the country was led by Balban in 1254 A.D. against Raihan, and the Sultan was compelled to restore Ulugh Khān to his old position. Raihan was sent back to his fief of Badāun.

In 1255 A.D. one last effort was made by the Muslim governors of Oudh and Sind to challenge the dictatorship of Balban. In league with some of the *amirs* and *maliks* at the capital, and a few disaffected Hindus, they sought to effect a junction. But their forces soon melted away. So did a Mongol invasion, under Nuyin Sari, in 1257 A.D. Two years later (1259 A.D.) an envoy was sent to Delhi by Chingiz Khān's grandson Halākū. He was received with great pomp and circumstance at a *darbār* presided over by the pious Sultan in person. After this we hear no more from contemporary chroniclers until we come to the accession of Balban himself as Sultan (1266 A. D.).

Balban the Doyen of Slaves :

More than twenty years of distinguished service had made Balban the premier statesman as well as soldier in the kingdom. The Raihan episode had convinced Nāsir-ud-dīn of the indispensable character of Balban to the state. So, before his death in 1266 A.D., the Sultan had nominated Ulugh Khān his successor to the throne, there being no male heir of his body. Besides, there was no one else who was equally competent to deal with the difficult situation. Nāsir-ud-dīn, therefore, did justice both to his subjects and to his chief minister by nominating him sovereign successor. Balban more than justified his exaltation by his highly competent rule as Sultan during the next twenty years (1266-86 A.D.).

In the words of Zia-ud-dīn Baranī, author of *Tarikh-i-Fīrūz Shāhi*, 'when he attained the throne he imparted to it new lustre, he brought the administration into order, and restored to efficiency institutions whose power had been shaken or destroyed. The dignity and authority of government were restored, and his stringent rules and resolute determination caused all

men, high and low, throughout his dominions, to submit to his authority. Fear and awe of him took possession of all men's hearts, but his justice and his consideration for his people won the favour of his subjects and made them zealous supporters of his throne.'

Rule of 'Blood and Iron':

"Balban, the slave, water-carrier, huntsman, general, statesman, and Sultan," writes Lane-Poole, "is one of the most striking figures among many notable men in the long line of the kings of Delhi." This impression was burnt into the memories of men by Sultan Ghiyās-ud-dīn Balban during the twenty years of his rule of 'blood and iron.' He was not devoid of softer feelings, for contemporary historians record many an anecdote about the Sultan being moved to tears. But the realist in him recognized the requirements of the age, and Balban sedulously cultivated just those qualities as were calculated to contribute to the success of his ambitious designs. He was a man who wrought up to his own patterns; in this he spared neither himself nor others. Up to his accession he had not denied himself the lighter pleasures of life. But when he ascended the throne, he assumed a stern dignity that both awed and surprised his erstwhile peers. Baranī's description of him presents us his correct picture:—

Majesty: 'Sultan Ghiyās-ud-dīn Balban was a man of experience in matters of government. From being a *malik* he became a *khān*, and from a *khān* he became a king. . . . In the first and second year he assumed great state, and made great display of his pomp and dignity. Muslims and Hindus would come from distances of one or two hundred leagues to see the splendour of his equipage, which filled them with amazement. No sovereign had ever before exhibited such pomp and grandeur in Delhi. For the twenty-two years that Balban reigned he maintained the dignity, honour, and majesty of the throne in a manner that could not be surpassed. Certain of his attendants who waited on him in private assured me that they never saw him otherwise than full-dress. During the whole time that he was Khān and Sultan, extending over nearly forty years, he never conversed with persons of low origin or occupation, and never indulged in any familiarity, either with friends or strangers, by which the dignity of the Sovereign could be lowered. He never joked with any one, nor did he allow any one to joke in his presence; he never laughed aloud, nor did he permit any one in his Court to laugh. As long as he lived no officer or acquaintance dared to recommend for employment any person of low position or extraction. In the administration of justice he was inflexible, showing no favour to his brethren or children, to his associates or attendants; and if any of them committed an act of injustice, he never failed to give redress and comfort to the injured person. No man dared to be too severe to his slaves

or hand-maids, to his horsemen or footmen.'

Justice : An examination of a few relevant cases will show that Baranī does not exaggerate. Malik Baqbaq of Badāun was a great nobleman who maintained 4,000 horse. But when he flogged one of his servants to death Balban caused him to be treated likewise and, in addition, hanged the news-writer of the place over the city-gate for having failed to report the crime. Similarly, Haibat Khān, the fief-holder of Oudh, was given five hundred stripes for slaying one of his own servants, in a drunken fit, and then handed over to the widow of the victim with the recommendation. "This murderer was my slave, he is now yours. Do you stab him as he stabbed your husband." The unfortunate nobleman purchased his life and freedom from the woman for a price of 20,000 *tankās*, and hid his head in shame for the rest of his life.

Suppression of Robbery : The same sternness and ruthlessness displayed themselves in the establishment of peace, order and security in the realm. For this purpose, in the very first year of his reign, 'the ripe judgment and experience of Balban was directed in the first place to the organisation of his army, *for the army is the source and means of government*. The cavalry and infantry, both old and new, were placed under the command of *maliks* of experience, of chiefs who held the first rank in their profession, and were brave, dignified and faithful.' The Meos of the Doab in particular had taken to very dangerous activities. They roved in huge gangs, like the Thugs six centuries later, and spread in all directions. Delhi itself was so much molested by them that the city-gates had to be closed after afternoon prayers. They stripped naked even the water-carriers and women who came to draw water from the great reservoirs within the city-walls. All through the country from Delhi to Bengal the roads and jungles were infested with robbers. In the year following his accession, therefore, Balban devoted himself heart and soul to their extirpation. The jungles were cleared, the Meos lurking in them put to death, forts were built and police outposts created in all the disturbed areas. In addition to this, as measures of precaution, the important towns and villages in the affected parts were granted as fiefs to powerful nobles. "Balban himself remained for many months in the districts of Patiyāli, Kampil, Bhojapur, and Jalālī, extirpated all highway robbers, built forts at those places, garrisoned them with Afghans, who received lands in their vicinity for their maintenance,

and by these measures secured the tranquillity of the roads between Delhi and Bengal for a century."

Repression of Hindus : When the Hindus of Katehar rebelled, in 1260 A.D., they were put down with such severity that 'The plain of Hauz Rānī and the gates of Delhi remembered no punishment like this, nor had one heard of such a tale of horror. By royal command many of the rebels were cast under the feet of elephants, and the fierce Turks cut the bodies of the Hindus in two. About a hundred met their death at the hands of the flayers, being skinned from head to foot ; their skins were all stuffed with straw, and some of them were hung over every gate of the city. The blood of the rioters ran in streams, heaps of the slain were seen near every village and jungle, and the stench of the dead even spread to the Ganges.' Males over eight years were killed and women carried into slavery. As a result of this holocaust and slaughter, the districts of Badāun, Amroha, Sāmbhal and Gannaur enjoyed the peace of death for thirty years. In 1268-69 A.D. again Balban raided the Salt Range, defeated and plundered the Hindus and captured so many horses that each animal sold in camp for 30 or 40 *tankās*. Balban distrusted the Hindus and never countenanced their employment in any office.

The Mongols : Though often defeated and driven out of India, the Mongol incursions never completely ceased. The reception accorded to their leader Halākū's envoy in the previous reign had indeed resulted in diplomatic exchanges between the Courts at Tabriz and Delhi, but this was only a truce. The menace of the Mongols being ever present on the north-west frontier, Balban had to maintain a formidable force in that region throughout his reign. At first he had placed his own cousin, Sher Khān Sunqar, in charge of the Punjab. But during his Salt Range campaign, described above, Balban discovered grave irregularities in the feudal arrangements of the frontier provinces, and replaced Sher Khān by his own sons, Princes Muhammad and Bughra Khān (1270 A.D.). Sher Khān having shown contumacious tendencies was recalled to Court where he died under suspicious circumstances ; it is suggested, poisoned at Balban's instance.

Prince Muhammad, the eldest son of Balban and heir-apparent to the throne, was a capable and enlightened governor. The poets Amir Khusrau and Amir Hasan lived at his court. "In him were centred all the hopes of the stern old king ; for him the Forty were

doomed, and for him the blood of near kinsmen was shed. . .Before his departure he was formally designated heir-apparent and was invested with some of the insignia of royalty." But all this proved vain in the event ; for, though the Mongols had been beaten off in 1279 A.D., they again appeared in 1285. This time the Prince won a pyrrhic victory, as he was himself slain in ambush to the great sorrow of his father who thereafter always referred to him as the *Shahīd* or martyr.

Tughril's Revolt : Bengal was the most intractable part of the empire. Lakhnauti, its capital, was known at Delhi as Balghākpūr or 'the city of rebellion.' Tughril, its governor, though a trusted slave of Balban, 'hatched the egg of ambition in his head,' finding his opportunity in the Sultan's illness in 1279 A.D. and the Mongol invasion of that year. He assumed royal insignia and had the *khutbah* read in his own name. Balban dispatched two generals, Amin Khān and Malik Targhi, in succession ; but both were defeated. Their armies were subdued with the gold no less than the arrows of the enemy. The infuriated Sultan, in his paroxysm of rage, ordered the defeated generals to be hanged over the gates of Ajodhya, and prepared to take the field in person. Though the rains had commenced, Balban accompanied by his younger son Bughra Khān, sailed down the Jamuna and the Ganges with a large fleet of boats. By the time he was in Oudh his army numbered 200,000. Tughril, getting reports of this, sought refuge in flight. He fled from Lakhnauti, with his army and most of the inhabitants, to Jājnagar (modern Orissa). There he was pursued and brought down by the arrows of a small reconnoitring party under Malik Muqaddir who gained by this adventure the title of *Tughril-Kush*, or 'the slayer of Tughril'. Then followed reprisals that shocked even the generation that had got accustomed to Balban's rule of 'blood and iron.' The two miles bazar street of Lakhnauti was lined with stakes on either side on which were impaled the bodies of the unfortunate rebels and their families. Other atrocities followed and having glutted his revenge, Balban called his son Bughra Khān to witness the shambles, and addressed these memorable words to him : "Understand me, and forget not, that if the governors of Hind or Sind, Mālwa or Gujarat, Lakhnauti or Sonārgaon, shall draw the sword and become rebels to the throne of Delhi, then such punishment as has fallen upon Tughril and his dependants will fall upon them, and their wives and children, and all their

adherents." The renegades and suspects in the Delhi army just escaped this fate on their return to the capital (1282 A.D.) owing to the intercession of the old *Kotwāl* of Delhi. Bughra Khān was left behind in charge of the province of Bengal where he and his descendants continued to rule till 1339 A.D.

Dénouement of the Dynasty :

While the descendants of Balban thus endured for half a century longer in a province that had ever proved refractory, at Delhi itself Balban's successors were overthrown in the course of less than five years after the death of the greatest Sultan of the Slave Dynasty. Balban himself died in 1286 A. D., within a year of Prince Muhammad's catastrophic end. The octogenarian Sultan, though he stoically went through all the business of the state in public after this, is said to have been so much affected that he tore his garments and threw dust on his head in utter sorrow when he was alone. Before he breathed his last, however, he nominated Bughra Khān, as his successor. But that indolent and sensual prince shirked the responsibility, and the disappointed father finally left the throne to the 'Martyr Prince' Muhammad's youthful son Kaikhusrau. Nevertheless, affairs at Delhi could not be so easily settled. No sooner were the aged Sultan's eyes stilled in death, than the Turki nobles raised another callow youth, Kaikubād (son of Bughra Khān), to the throne. Brought up under the iron restraints of his grandfather, Kaikubād utilised his elevation to degrade himself and the nobility. Orgies of all kinds of sensual indulgence became the routine at Court, and Malik Nizām-ud-dīn, a nephew of the influential *Kotwāl* of Delhi, usurped all real power. Kaikhusrau, the heir-designate of Balban, was murdered in cold blood. Likewise were a number of nobles of the *ancient régime* executed under various charges. Khwāja Khatīr *vezir* of the Sultan himself did not escape humiliation ; seated on an ass he was paraded through the streets of the capital.

Such insensate tyranny could not continue for long, however. Nemesis came in the shape of a Mongol raid. Under their leader Tamar Khān of Ghazni, they harried the Punjab and plundered Lahore. But the existence of Balban's efficient army saved Delhi. The 'New Muslims', as the converted Mongols were called, who had settled in the vicinity of Delhi were massacred by way of reprisals. In the wake of this, even the listless Bughra Khān from Bengal mar-

ched to Delhi with a large army, ostensibly 'to pay homage to the Sultan' but really to rescue his son from the tyranny of Nizām-ud-dīn. When he had to leave the capital disappointed, touchingly he took leave of Kaikubād and sighed as he left saying, "Alas! I have seen the last of my son, and the last of Delhi." Events very soon proved these gloomy anticipations. Faction fights arose between the Turks and the Khaljīs. Nizām-ud-dīn was himself dismissed and poisoned, and the wretched Kaikubād, stricken with paralysis (the natural consequence of his excesses), was kicked to death by one of the soldiers as he lay helpless in his palace. The last of the Slave family to reign at Delhi thus died the death of a slave. His body was unceremoniously rolled up in his bed and thrown into the Jamuna. The throne was seized by Jalāl-ud-dīn Fīrūz Khaljī who was *Ariz-i-mamālik* or Muster Master of the army. He was crowned at Kilughari, on 13 June 1290, entitled Jalāl-ud-dīn Fīrūz Shāh Khaljī. A new dynasty came into power at Delhi, destined to carry Muslim conquest a stage further, into South India, in the course of the next thirty years.

SOME RELEVANT DATES

A.D.	
712	Arab invasion of Sind.
1001	Mahmūd of Ghazni's first invasion of India.
1186	Muhammad Ghūri overthrew the last Ghaznavid at Lahore.
1206-10	Kutb-ud-dīn Aibak the first Slave Sultan at Delhi.
1221-22	Chingiz Khān's invasion of India.
1240	Mongols hold all Russia tributary.
1258	Destruction of Bagdad by Halākū.
1260-94	Kubla Khān, Halākū's brother, rules from Hungary to China.
1271-96	Travels of Marco Polo.
1286	Death of Balban, the greatest Slave King.
1290	Jalāl-ud-dīn Fīrūz Khaljī's accession.
1296-1307	Repeated Mongol incursions in the Punjab.
1303	Sack of Chitor by Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī.
1310-11	Malik Kāfur carried Muslim arms to Madura and Ramesvaram (?).
1318	End of the Yādava kingdom of Deogiri; Harapāla flayed alive. Four Franciscans burnt for heresy at Marseilles.

CHAPTER V

FIRST EMPIRE OF THE CRESCENT : KHALJĪ

Clemency King Fīrūz :

The septuagenarian chief who ascended the throne at Kilughari on 13 June 1290 was too soft and saintly to keep the crown for long. He belonged to a tribe which, having been long settled in Afghanistan and India, was hated by the other Turks of more recent immigration. The fiery warriors who surrounded him could not understand the lacrymose old man when he shed a flood of tears as he entered the Red Palace and apostrophised on the hollowness of royalty and his own unworthiness. However, he made up for the disappointment thus caused, by a lavish disbursement of titles and honours among his courtiers and relations, and by building up a new city (*Shahr-i-nau*) at Kilughari. In the conferment of favours he did not also fail to conciliate the Turks who had opposed his accession. Malik Chajju, Balban's nephew, for example, was given charge of the fief of Kara-Manikpur. But before a few months had passed it became more and more evident that Jalāl-ud-dīn Fīrūz was already in the grip of senility. He was too clement to be king in an age when 'blood and iron' alone could tell. He was soon overtaken by a whirlwind of troubles that ended, not only by removing the crown from his head, but also the head from his shoulders.

The first to take advantage of the Sultan's weakness was the scion of the old dynasty who had been given a fief instead of the usual halter. Malik Chajju declared himself Sultan at Kara and had the *Khutbah* read in his own name assuming the title of Mughis-ud-dīn (1291 A. D.). Not content with this he marched towards Delhi to recover the throne of his family. Round his banner rallied the *rāwats* and *Pāiks* of Hindustan 'like ants and locusts'. But the heroism of the aged Sultan's son, Arkāli Khān, triumphed over the rebels who were defeated and brought into Jalāl-ud-dīn's presence 'with yokes upon their shoulders, their hands tied behind their necks, covered with dust and dirt, and their garments all soiled. Fīrūz on seeing their helpless humiliation melted into tears, commended their

loyalty to the late dynasty, and treated them as royal guests. The arch-rebel, Malik Chajju, was sent to Multan with generous gifts of food and raiment, fruit and wine !

The clemency of Fīrūz reached its climax when he treated robbers and *thugs* as he had treated the rebels. When they were caught in their thousands and brought before the Sultan, they were sermonised on the evils of theft, warned not to do it again, and dumped into Bengal in boats down the Ganges.

When the Sultanate was drifting on to the shoals like this, some of the more far-seeing nobles, like Ahmad Chāp the Chamberlain, conferred together ; the more irascible ones, like Tāj-ud-dīn Kuchi, offered to cut old Jalāl-ud-dīn like a cucumber and usurp the throne. When these confabulations caught the ear of the aged Sultan, however, they were pardoned and warned that if they persisted they would be made over to the more relentless Arkāli Khān.

To make up for such lenity the senile Sultan caught the wrong tartar to make an example of. When the *dervish* Sidi Maula, a disciple of the famous Sheikh Farīd-ud-dīn Ganj-i-Shakar of Pāk Pātan, was implicated in a plot to murder Sultan Fīrūz, like Henry II of England a century earlier, Jalāl-ud-dīn cried out in anger, 'Oh *Dervishes*, will none of you rid me of this Maula !' Instantly Sidi Maula met the fate of Thomas à Becket. A famine which followed was attributed by the credulous to the sacrilege of the Sultan.

The military conduct of this king was not more satisfying to the martial nobility. He did indeed lead an expedition or two, in the year of his accession (1290 A. D.), but he covered his inability to conquer with the pious camouflage that he valued the lives of the Musalman soldiers more than any forts of the infidels. He 'destroyed the idol temples and broke and burnt the idols' at Jhāin, but turned back from the more renowned Rantambhor in the face of determined Rajput resistance. Two years later (1292 A.D.) he encountered the Mongols under Abdulla, a grandson of Halākū. After inflicting a defeat on them, he allowed them to settle in the neighbourhood of Delhi. He built quarters for them and gave his daughter in marriage to one of their leaders, a reputed grandson of Chingiz Khān.

Fall of Fīrūz :

Such, in brief, was the character of Sultan Jalāl-ud-dīn Fīrūz Khaljī during his six years' reign. In 1296 A.D. he fell a victim to

his own nephew and son-in-law, the ambitious Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī, whom he had appointed to the fief of Kara after the suppression of Malik Chajju's revolt. In 1292 A.D. Alā-ud-dīn invaded Mālwa and brought much booty from Bhilsa, which he craftily laid at the feet of the Sultan at Delhi. For this he was rewarded by the addition of Oudh to his fief of Kara. Encouraged by this Alā-ud-dīn undertook another "exploit as daring and impudent as any recorded in history." In 1294 A. D. with a bare 8,000 horse he led his famous expedition to Deogiri in the Deccan. There he wrought upon the Yādava king Rāmachandra, much as Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn Khaljī had done over Lakshmaṇa Sena at Lakhnauti in 1202 A.D. Despite the heroic resistance of the Yādava crown-prince, Shankerdeo, Deogiri (Daulatābād) was successfully stormed, and the Rāja was compelled to surrender Elichpur. The conqueror extorted such booty from the vanquished that his camels and pack-horses groaned under its weight as they laboured back to Kara. The indemnity alone amounted to 17,250 pounds of gold, 200 pounds of pearl, 58 pounds of other gems, besides 28,250 pounds of silver and 1000 pieces of silk.

When the doting Fīrūz heard of this incredible venture he hurried to Kara to congratulate his nephew, against all counsels of his discerning chamberlain Ahmad Chāp. There, in 1296 A.D. Alā-ud-dīn perpetrated "one of the basest murders in history" and proclaimed himself Sultan. The kind-hearted and unsuspecting Jalāl-ud-dīn was assassinated by hirelings just when he had stooped to lift up his dissimulating nephew who pretended to bow low in homage before him.

A Reign of Terror and Bounty :

Treachery, terror and bounty are the aptest words in which to sum up the character of Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī's reign of twenty years (1296-1316 A.D.). It began in treachery, throve in bounty, and ended in terror.

Arkāli Khān being in Multan at the time of his father's murder, his younger brother Ibrāhim was proclaimed at Delhi as Sultan Rukn-ud-dīn. But Alā-ud-dīn quickly marched upon the capital with an enormous army of 60,000 horse and 60,000 foot. The supporters of Ibrāhim were soon put to flight. They gathered at Multan only to be hotly pursued, captured, blinded, imprisoned or killed by the new ruler's officers. Alā-ud-dīn, "having gained the throne by an act of

treachery and ingratitude seldom equalled even in oriental annals, conciliated the populace by a lavish distribution of his southern gold." As he entered his new capital he literally rained gold and silver coins among a greedy populace. 'The throne was now secure,' Baranī tells us, 'and the magistrates and the chief men of the city came out to Alā-ud-dīn, and a new order of things was established. His wealth and power were great ; so whether individuals paid their allegiance or whether they did not, mattered little, for the *khutbah* was read and the coins were struck in his name.'

But the philosophic historian does not also fail to observe, 'Although Alā-ud-dīn reigned successfully for some years, and all things prospered to his wish, and though he had wives and children, family and adherents, wealth and grandeur, still he did not escape retribution for the blood of his patron. He shed more innocent blood than ever Pharaoh was guilty of. Fate at length placed a betrayer in his path, by whom his family was destroyed, and the retribution that fell upon it never had a parallel in any infidel land.'

The Mongols Again :

Though the usurper's crime had been hushed in gold the ever-recurring Mongol flood had not stopped. In the second year of Alā-ud-dīn's reign they came again, 100,000 of those 'fiery sons of the devil' under their leader Amir Daud, ruler of Transoxiana. But Ulugh Khān, the Sultan's son-in-law who had been appointed to the western provinces, proved equal to the situation. The Mongols were driven with heavy losses. Yet did they persist. A second invasion came, under the leadership of Saldi, but only to be beaten again. Saldi was captured with 2,000 followers and sent to Delhi in chains. Ins-stead of the weak and senile Jalāl-ud-dīn this time there was seated on the throne of Hindustan the stern and determined Alā-ud-dīn. But it was sometime before the Mongols felt the difference. In 1299 A.D. they swarmed in like locusts, in countless numbers, and threatened to deluge the Punjab to the very gates of the capital. Alā-ud-dīn was confronted with an appreciable crisis, and he took the field in person, with 12,000 tried warriors, and assisted by two experienced officers, Ulugh Khān and Zafar Khān. Both of these captains had borne the brunt of earlier Mongol raids and Zafar Khān, in particular, had a reputation for being the Rustam of his age. The barbarians were routed with such heavy casualties on this occasion that, though Zafar

Khān was ambushed and killed, they remembered with horror his prowess for generations. Contemporary records say that if their horses refused to drink at a stream the Mongols would ask them if they had seen Zafar Khān !

Nevertheless, their incorrigible wander-lust lured them again and again to the Indus. In 1304 A.D. they even ventured to cross the Siwaliks and raided Amroha. Encouraged by success they led a formidable incursion into the Punjab in 1307 A.D. But they were repulsed with great severity by Ghāzi Tughlak, who caught hold of their leaders, and had them trampled under the feet of elephants. After this Alā-ud-dīn adopted the policy of Balban and, as permanent measures of security, created strong military outposts, fortifying places lying on the path of the Mongols, like Dipālpur and Samana. A large number of the invaders had settled from time to time in the vicinity of the capital and, as stated before, were known as 'the New Muslims.' Their attitude and conduct having been found contumacious 20,000 to 30,000 of them were exterminated in a day. Owing to 'the crafty cruelty' of the new Sultan, according to Baranī, not even their women and children were spared. 'Up to this time no hand had ever been laid upon wives or children on account of men's misdeeds.'

'A Second Alexander' :

Alā-ud-dīn was not more cruel and crafty than ambitious. To secure the objects of his desire he would stop short of nothing, and his ambition was unlimited. If there was ever a prince who never felt a moral scruple it was Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī. He wanted to be a second Alexander, though he lacked that great conqueror's essential nobility of character. For this he murdered his patron, uncle and father-in-law ; for this he plundered Deogiri ; for this he extirpated the Mongols. And for this also he extirminated, not only the heirs of his predecessor, but all those Jalāli nobles who had accepted his gold and transferred their allegiance to him. Those who had once proved treacherous might do so again. Then he turned heart and soul to conquest. We shall presently witness how Anhilwārā, Chitor, Ujjain, Wārangal, Dwārasamudra, and Madura were subdued. The fate of the rulers of these places was, however, far different from that of Porus when Alexander conquered.

Gujarat : Ulugh Khān and Nasrat Khān were sent to Gujarat. Though Anhilwārā had been twice looted by Aibak, Gujarat had not

been subdued. Somnāth was again plundered after two hundred and seventy years (1297 A.D.). The idol which had been reinstated since its desecration in 1025 A.D. was once more uprooted and sent to Delhi as a trophy. There were other idols besides, which were perhaps better appreciated by the Sultan. Kamal Devi, the wife of Rāja Karaṇ who had fled with his beautiful daughter, Deval Devi, to Deogiri, fell into the impious hands of the conquerors. She too was despatched to Delhi to feed the insatiable lust of Alā-ud-dīn. But the greatest prize of all was bagged in the *hazār-dinārī* slave, Malik Kāfur, who was a eunuch. The autocrat liked him for his beauty and kept him as his vile favourite until he discovered in him a great conqueror. Malik Kāfur was destined to play the rôle of Aibak and Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn to Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī, for he extended Muslim conquests to the utmost corners of South India. But he also lived to eclipse the Sultan and ruin the Khaljī dynasty. Meantime Ulugh Khān and Nasrat Khān proceeded to Cambay and levied heavy blackmail from its wealthy merchants and took away a vast treasure. A scramble for its appropriation resulted in a mutiny, especially among the New Muslims in the army, followed by reprisals hardly paralleled in history. Nusrat Khān's brother was murdered, and 'in revenge,' writes Baranī, 'he ordered the wives of the assassins to be dishonoured and exposed to most disgraceful treatment; he then handed them over to vile persons to make common strumpets of them. The children he caused to be cut to pieces on the heads of their mothers.' Outrages like these, Baranī comments with disgust, 'are practised in no religion or creed. These and similar acts of his filled the people of Delhi with amazement and dismay, and every bosom trembled.'

Rajputāna : Two years after the conquest of Gujarat Alā-ud-dīn turned towards Rajputāna (1299 A.D.). The interval was partly taken up with the Mongols in the Punjab and partly with other activities. Meanwhile, with increasing successes, the Sultan was getting more ambitious every year. In the words of Baranī,—

> 'In the third year of his reign Alā-ud-dīn had little to do beyond attending to his pleasures, giving feasts, and holding festivals. One success followed another ; dispatches of victory came in from all sides ; every year he had two or three sons born ; affairs of state went on to his satisfaction, his treasury was overflowing, boxes and caskets of jewels and pearls were daily displayed before his eyes, he had numerous elephants in his stables and 70,000 horses in the city and environs....All this prosperity intoxicated

him....In his conceit, ignorance, and folly, he completely lost his balance, formed utterly impossible schemes, and cherished the wildest desires.'

While in his cups, Alā-ud-dīn felt like emulating the exploits of the Great Macedonian. Nay, he felt inspired to play the rôle of the Prophet himself. In Ulugh Khān, Nasrat Khān, Zafar Khān and Alp Khān he discovered the parallel of Muhammad's four lieutenants, Abu Bekr, Usman, Umar, and Ali. But his candid adviser, Alā-ul-Mulk, *Kotwāl* of Delhi, dispelled all his hallucinations. "Religion and law," he told the Sultan, "spring from heavenly revelation ; they are never established by the plans and designs of men...The prophetic office has never appertained to kings, and never will, so long as the world lasts, though some prophets have discharged the functions of royalty." Then Alā-ul-Mulk pointed out how Chingiz Khān, although he made rivers of blood flow in Muslim cities, could not establish Mongol religion or institutions among the Muslims : "Many Mongols have turned Musalmans, but no Musalman has ever become a Mongol." Likewise did he tell Alā-ud-dīn, "these are not the days of Alexander, and where will there be found a *vezir* like Aristotle ? " So he exhorted the Sultan rather to complete the unfinished task of subduing Hindustan, than indulge in extravagant fancies impossible of accomplishment. Above all he boldly urged, "What I have recommended can never be accomplished unless your Majesty gives up drinking to excess, and keeps aloof from convivial parties and feasts."

Alā-ud-dīn in his sober moments had the good sense to follow this wholesome advice. The campaign in Rajputāna was the first fruit of a more realistic policy. It opened with the siege of Rantambhor (1299-1301 A.D.). This renowned fortress had been seized several times, the last by Jalāl-ud-dīn, only to be lost betimes. Now the heroes of the Gujarat campaign, Ulugh Khān and Nasrat Khān, were despatched for its conquest. But, after the capture of Jhāin on the way, Nasrat Khān was killed in action at the siege of Rantambhor. Rāṇa Hamīr and his brave Rajputs valiantly defended the stronghold, and reinforcements being felt necessary Alā-ud-dīn himself marched to assist his brother. Though very much distracted by a series of revolts, in his camp, in his capital, and elsewhere, the determined Sultan persisted and was rewarded with success in the end. In July 1301 the fortress fell, the Rāṇa and his family were put to death (or killed themselves according to other accounts), and the palaces

and other buildings were razed to the ground. Finally, following his policy begun at Delhi, Raṇmal, renegade minister of Hamīr, and others who had betrayed their master, were also punished with death. "It was characteristic of Alā-ud-din", observes Sir Wolseley Haig, "to avail himself of the services of traitors and then to punish them for the treason by which he had profited."

Next came the turn of Mewar (1302-03 A.D.). Alā-ud-dīn was lured to Chitor both by the itch for conquest and lust for its far-famed queen Padmini. The details of this campaign and the heroic strategy of the Rāṇi that foiled the Sultan of his long coveted quarry, are a part of the familiar epic of Rājasthān. The Rāṇa was betrayed into captivity, and offered his freedom on the ransom of his beautiful queen. No greater challenge to Rajput honour could have been given. The resourcefulness of the Rāṇi, or her daughter, came to the rescue. A contingent of armed Rajputs was demanded for escorting the ladies to the enemy's camp. They accomplished instead the unsuspected purpose of rescuing the Rāṇa back to his capital. Then followed a holocaust in which the chivalry of Rājasthān perished ere the Mlechcha could pollute a drop of noble Kshatriya blood.

"The funeral pyre was lighted within the 'great subterranean retreat', in chambers impervious to the light of day, and the defenders of Chitor beheld in procession the queens, their own wives and daughters, to the number of several thousands....conveyed to the cavern, and the opening closed upon them, leaving them to find security from dishonour in the devouring element."

Chitor was taken, Alā-ud-dīn's son, Khizr Khān, was put in charge of it, and the fortress was renamed Khizrābād (Monday, 26 August 1303). 30,000 Hindus were massacred. But the sensual prince could not hold the place beyond 1311 A.D., and Alā-ud-dīn was obliged to replace him by Maldeo, a Rajput chief of the Sonigra clan. Even this arrangement proved a failure, for, seven years later, Rāṇa Hamīr recovered the ancient stronghold of his ancestors.

Mālwa: The subjugation of Rajputāna was followed by that of Mālwa (1305 A.D.). Māndu, Ujjain, Dhāra, Chānderi, etc. were soon compelled to accept the suzerainty of the Sultan of Delhi. In the opinion of Tod, the entire Agnikula race of Rajputs—the Solānkis, Paramārs, Parihārs, etc.—was overturned by Alā-ud-dīn, from Anhilwārā to Deogiri.

The Crescent in South India :

Deogiri : In 1306-7 A.D. another expedition was made to Deogiri on the ostensible ground of recovering from Rāja Rāmachandra the revenues of Elichpur which had not been paid for three years. But the real object was the capture of another *houri* for the royal *harem* at Delhi, viz., Deval Devi, the daughter of Rāja Karaṇ of Anhilwārā, who had sought refuge in the Yādava stronghold, during Ulugh Khān's Gujarat campaign in 1297 A.D. Alp Khān, who was in charge of Gujarat, and Malik Kāfur, the *hazār-dinārī*, who was now *Naib* or Deputy of the Kingdom, were entrusted with this houri-hunting campaign. To cut a long story short, the coveted prize was secured by Alp Khān who dispatched her to Delhi where she was married to the worthless Khizr Khān. Malik Naib (Kāfur) marched to Deogiri, secured the person of Rāja Rāmachandra, sent him to the Sultan, and appointed a Muslim governor over Elichpur to obviate future troubles. However, Alā-ud-dīn for once showed magnanimity towards the captive Rāja, perhaps out of superstitious regard for his vicarious benefactor, and allowed the Yādava to return to his capital with the honour of being made a *Rāi-rāyān* ('chief of chiefs').

Telingana : The victorious Malik Kāfur was dispatched against Wārangal in 1309 A.D. One previous attempt in that direction had proved abortive on account of the sudden death of Alā-ud-dīn's brother, Ulugh Khān, who was to conduct it. But the object of this campaign was plunder or tribute more than extension of dominion. In all the other conquered provinces, Gujarat, Rajputāna, Mālwa, and Elichpur, Muslim governors had been appointed. But now Alā-ud-dīn's instructions were specific. 'If the Rāi consented to surrender his treasure and jewels, elephants and horses, and also to send treasure and elephants in the following year, Malik Kāfur was to accept these terms and not press the Rāi too hard...If he could not do this, he was, for the sake of his own name and fame, to bring the Rāi with him to Delhi.' Malik Kāfur was helped *en route* by the then loyal Hindu feudatory of Deogiri, and as he marched from Deogiri to Wārangal the *hazār-dinārī* wasted the land with fire and sword driving its inhabitants before him. Unable to withstand this fury the Rāja of Wārangal, Pratāparudradeva II Kākatiya (Rai Ladar Deo the Muslim historians call him) surrendered 300 elephants, 7000 horses, and vast quantities of coined money and jewels, with

the further promise of an annual tribute. The Muslims lumbered back to Delhi with the weight of this enormous booty.

Dwārasamudra : Like Mahmūd of Ghazni before him, the cupidity of the conqueror increased in proportion to the wealth that each campaign brought in. The easy success won in Telingana tempted Malik Kāfur to browse farther afield. The next, and his last, expedition was directed against the Hoysala capital, Dwārasamudra or Dwāravatīpura (Halēbīd in Mysore). Possibly, on account of the increasing hostilities between the Hoysalas and the Yādavas, the invader was incited by the already subdued Yādava prince, to destroy the southern city. Malik Kāfur appeared in force before Dwārasamudra in 1310 A.D. Its ruler Vīra Ballāla III offered but feeble resistance. He was taken captive and sent to Delhi. His temples and palaces were plundered and destroyed, yielding the usual treasures.

Madura : The victor was drawn into the Pāndya kingdom by internal squabbles between two rival princes. Sundara Pāndya the legitimate but younger son of Kulashekhara, having killed his father, was challenged by Vīra Pāndya his natural but elder brother. The former, being driven out, invited the Muslims to interfere. Malik Kāfur, too ready to profit by the opportunity, plundered Madura, and culminated his great campaign by founding mosques in this extreme end of the peninsula. The treasures that were looted might have made Mahmūd turn in his grave at Ghazni with wistful eyes. Malik Naib, according to Sir Wolseley Haig, left Madura on 24 April 1211 and reached Delhi on 18 October of the same year, with spoils including 312 elephants, 20,000 horses, 2,750 pounds of gold, equal in value to 100,000,000 *tankās,* and chests of *jewels.* "No such booty had ever before been brought to Delhi : the spoils of Deogiri could not compare with those of Dvāravatīpura and Madura, and the king, when receiving the leaders of the expedition in the Palace of the Thousand Pillars at Sīrī, distributed largesse to them and to the learned men of Delhi with a lavish hand."

Ma'bar or Malabar? The exact limits of Malik Kāfur's South Indian campaign are hard to determine. The term Ma'bar used by Muslim writers has been applied to the east coast extending from 'Kulam to Nilāwar,' i.e., from Quilon to Nellore. There could be no difference of opinion about the identity of the former place. But the identification of the latter (Nilāwar) with Nellore on the Coromandel coast cannot be established with certainty. The following note by

Lane-Poole (*Mediæval India*, p. 114) is worthy of the best consideration :—

" Kāfur founded a mosque on the coast. If it was the same mosque 'Built by the officers of Sultan Ala-ud-din ' at ' Seeta Bunda Ramessar,' which Firishta says was repaired by the Bahmanid Sultan Mujahid about 1378, it must have been on the Malabar coast or west of India. ' Ramessar ' cannot be Ramesvara which is on the Coromandel coast opposite Ceylon. Cape Ramas, south of Goa, as suggested by Briggs, seems a more probable identification. Ma'bar, which Wassaf defines as extending from Kulam (Quilon) to Nilawar (Nileswara) has usually been identified with the Coromandel or east coast. But this Persian traveller, who wrote âbout 1300, not only defines Ma'bar as above stated, but describes it immediately after Gujarat, and states that Persian horses were exported ' to Ma'bar, Kambayat (Cambay), and other ports in their neighbourhood ' (Elliot and Dowson, iii, 33). The fact that Kāfur marched on to Ma'bar from Dvara-Samudra agrees with Wassaf's definition."

There are two places in the South Kanara District bearing the names Nilāwar and Nileshwara respectively. That Malik Kāfur went past Kadūr where he encountered a few Māplās makes it probable that one of these places on the west coast was meant by Wassāf rather than Nellore on the east coast. Sir Wolseley Haig writes, " An interesting fact recorded of the expedition into the kingdom of Dvāravatīpura is the encounter of Malik Naib's army at Kadūr with some Moplahs, who are described as half Hindus, and lax in their religious observances, but as they could repeat the *Kalima*, or symbol of Islam, their lives were spared ", (*The Cambridge History of India*, III, p. 116).

Last of the Deccan :

The imperialistic detour of the Khaljī commander was rounded off with a final stroke against Shankerdeo of Deogiri, who being a doubtful friend was worse than an open enemy. On the ground of default in tribute, Malik Kāfur for the last time marched into the territories of the Yādavas in 1312 A.D. The loyalist Rāmachandra, to use the Yavana phrase, had already ' gone to hell.' Shankerdeo had been always refractory. He was now defeated and beheaded. The important fortresses of Gulburga, Rāichūr and Mūdgal were captured, and the whole country between the Krishna and Tungabhadra was subdued. Six years later, Shankerdeo's successor, Harapāla, rebelled against Mubārak, the then reigning Sultan at Delhi (1318 A.D.). The last of the Khaljīs treated the last of the Yādavas more barbarously

than ever Alā-ud-dīn had done any of his infidel feudatories. ... pāla was flayed alive. A like calamity was averted by the Rāi ... Telingana by timely submission to Khusru, Mubārak's evil geni... and a low born Hindu convert from Gujarat like the *hazār-dinārī* Malik Kāfur. Five districts of the Kākatiya territories were ceded to the Sultan as a token of submission and an annual tribute promised of 'more than a hundred strong elephants as large as demons, 12,000 horses, and gold, jewels and gems beyond compute.'

A Revolutionary Régime :

All things considered, Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī's reign of twenty years (1296-1306 A.D.) constituted a revolutionary régime. It began with his revolutionary seizure of power, in 1296 A.D., and ended with the *coup d'etat* of his minion Malik Kāfur, in 1306 A.D. In fact, the entire epoch of the Khaljīs, from Jalāl-ud-dīn Fīrūz (1190 A.D.) to the usurper Khusru Shāh (1320 A.D.), shared that character. In the words of Dr. R. P. Tripathi, "One of the most significant consequences of the Khilji revolution was that it gave a heavy blow to the growing sentiment of loyalty that was gathering round the throne of Delhi and was likely to bear good results. If the Khiljis had not nipped in the bud the traditions of dignity and loyalty, and had allowed them to grow up and reach full stature, the element of militarism would have been minimised, and new traditions of rights and duties of command and obedience, would have probably crystallised as in some other countries of the world. Unfortunately the Khilji revolution threw into shade the civil side of the Government, and accentuating the military aspect established a dangerous precedent that continued to sap the vitality of the Delhi Sultanat" (*Some Aspects of Muslim Administration*, p. 41).

It is necessary to review a few incidents in the reign of Alā-ud-dīn to understand the *raison d'être* of the revolutionary administrative system that he established. "From a succession of revolts in the opening months of his reign," as Moreland has observed, "he learned the need for vigorous administration, and thence forward... the need for security, internal as well as external," became "the dominant note of his policy."

Symptoms of Insecurity :

Even after the legitimate claimants to Jalāl-ud-dīn's throne had

been put out of action, Alā-ud-dīn did not feel quite secure. The Jalāi nobles, whose support or acquiescence he had won through lavish expenditure of gold, were indeed serpents whom he had fed with milk ; they could not be trusted on this side of the grave. So they were made to disgorge all their property, their lands were confiscated, and their children turned adrift. The more dangerous among them were blinded, imprisoned, or put to death. This grand detergence brought into the royal coffers not less than a crore of standard money, but it did no more than scotch the vile reptile. The survivors of this persecution were not likely to keep quiet for aye. Their pent up furies broke into revolt as soon as the tyrant left Delhi for his first campaign. In 1299-1301 A.D., when Alā-ud-dīn was engaged in the siege of Rantambhor, we mentioned, there were a number of rebellions. Perhaps the most dangerous of these was that of Hāji Maula at the capital. The rebels secured the city-gates, plundered the royal treasury and raised an obscure youth, supposed to be a descendant of Iltutmish, to the throne and proclaimed him as Shāh-in-Shāh. When retribution came, in the course of a few days, the miscreants were all put to death. Even the sons of the great *Kotwāl* of Delhi were executed on a charge of complicity.

There were three other revolts during the same short period. Amīr 'Umar and Mangū Khān, two of Alā-ud-dīn's sister's sons rebelled in Badāun and Oudh. They were, however, soon captured and brought before their uncle who had their eyes cut out in his own presence. The third was by another nephew of Alā-ud-dīn in his own camp. The Sultan had been out on a hunting expedition at Rantambhor, when he was separated from the main army at some distance. In this isolation his brother's son, Ākat Khān, suddenly felt tempted to emulate his uncle and make a bold bid for the throne. Alā-ud-dīn was attacked and very nearly assassinated. Ākat Khan, "leaving the Sultan for dead, sat himself upon the throne, received the homage of the nobles, and was even about to enter his uncle's harem when the eunuch Malik Dinar faced him at the door and swore he should not go in until he produced Alā-ud-dīn's head. The head all too soon appeared, set alertly as ever on its own shoulders, as the living Sultan showed himself to the army on a neighbouring knoll. The rebel Akat Khan was beheaded instead of his uncle ; the conspirators were scourged to death with wire thongs, and their wives and children sent into captivity."

Remedies against Rebellion :

These successive revolts convinced Alā-ud-dīn that something drastic should be attempted to remedy this state of affairs. His analytic brain discovered four causes of chronic contumacy : (1) the neglect of *espionage* which should keep him always alert whatever might happen in any part of the kingdom ; (2) the habit of drinking wine without let or hindrance ; (3) frequent intercourse between the nobles and leaders of society which bred conspiracy ; and (4) unchecked growth of private property which afforded sufficient leisure to hatch mischievous plots against the ruler. Alā-ud-dīn was a stern realist who, once convinced of a course of action, pursued it relentlessly so far as the logic of facts permitted. " To prevent rebellion in which thousands perish," he declared, " I issue such orders as I conceive to be for the good of the state, and the benefit of the people. Men are heedless, disrespectful, and disobey my commands ; I am then compelled to be severe to bring them into obedience.. .*I do not know whether this is lawful or unlawful* ; *whatever I think to be for the good of the state, or suitable for the emergency, that I decree,* and for what may happen to me on the approaching Day of Judgment that I know not."

Secularisation of the State :

Such *secularism* as is reflected in the above enunciation of Alā-ud-dīn's attitude in matters of State, and the other dialogues between him and Kāzī Mughis-ud-dīn, recorded by Baranī, is surprising in a Muslim ruler of the thirteenth century. A devotee of *real politic* though he was, Alā-ud-dīn had not drifted completely from the theocratic moorings of Islamic society. Although he was a powerful monarch and could hold his own against any Asiatic ruler, Dr. Tripathi observes, Alā-ud-dīn " did not assume any title higher than ' Sikandar ' and continued to style himself ' Yamīn-ul-Khilāfat Nāṣiri Amīr-ul-Muminīn.' " That a monarch enjoying so much power and prestige should choose to call himself a lieutenant of the disgraced and powerless Khilāfat, he says, " is a fact of considerable significance." The same writer further points out that what Alā-ud-dīn had failed to do was done by his son Mubārak. " He was the first ruler who had ventured to shake off the fiction of the Khilāfat and thereby proclaim the sovereign power of the Sultanat of Delhi independent

of the Khilāfat, and refused to recognise the legal superiority of any power outside his empire. He went even further when he declared himself the Great Imām the representative of God (al Imām ul 'Āzam Khalīfai Rabbul 'Ālimīn or Khalifat ullāh or Amīr-ul-Muminīn)." If this does not indicate utter secularisation of the affairs of state, it certainly shows the trend towards the emancipation of the administration from clerical domination. Perhaps, as we shall presently see, it indicated more than anything else, that the Sultan's power and authority were firmly established in this country and autocracy at Delhi was trying to perfect itself. That even highly secularised autocracies are not free from religious persecution has been too well demonstrated by modern Dictators. The keynote of the new administration was "*Whatever I think to be for the good of the State, or suitable for the emergency, that I decree.*"

Autocracy Crystallises :

The great thing about Alā-ud-dīn was that he thought, planned systematically, and executed ruthlessly ; if the logic of facts convinced him to the contrary, he compromised and adapted himself to circumstances.

(1) The imperial spy-system was efficiently organised and worked as well, perhaps, as it did under the Mauryas. In a far-flung dominion with primitive means of communication the official news-reporter was an indispensable desideratum. If he proved perfunctory or otherwise derelict in his duties he was summarily executed and made an example of.

(2) The prohibition of liquor was a drastic but salutory measure, bound to react wholesomely on society and politics. The Sultan not merely dictated abstinence to others, as did Jahangir later, but himself set the example : ' jars and casks of wine were brought out of royal cellars, and emptied at the Badaun gate in such abundance that mud and mire were produced as in the rainy season.' Nevertheless, smuggling and boot-legging soon convinced Alā-ud-dīn of the necessity of relaxing the stringency of the law. He accordingly restricted prohibition to public use at convivial gatherings and vintage or distillation for traffic only. All social relations, including marriages between two noble families, were brought under strict surveillance and control.

(3) The lot of the Hindus, in particular, under Alā-ud-dīn's vigilant autocracy, became more irksome than it had ever been un-

der the previous Sultans. It had its parallel only in the condition of the Jats of Sind under their Chach and Arab rulers. The oft-cited dictum of the Kāzī of Bayāna undoubtedly represented the attitude of uncompromising orthodoxy towards the Hindus. There is reason to believe that Alā-ud-dīn respected the sacerdotal prescription in this regard no more than he did the *obiter dicta* of the Kāzī of Delhi about his own appropriation of the booty captured in war.

'They are called *Khirāj-guzārs*', the Kāzī is reported to have declared, 'and when the revenue officer demands silver from them, they should without question and with all humility and respect, tender gold. If the *Muhassil* chooses to spit into the mouth of a Hindu, the latter must open his mouth without hesitation.' Even the Kāzī did not seem to have meant this literally for he added, 'The meaning of doing such a thing is that the Hindu by acting in this wise shows his meekness and humility, and obedience and respect. The glorification of Islam is a duty, and contempt of the religion is vain. God himself has commanded their subjection, inasmuch as the Hindus are the deadliest foes of the Prophet. The Prophet has said that they should either embrace Islam or they should be slain or enslaved, and their property should be confiscated to the State. No one except the great doctor Abu Hanifa allows the imposition of the *jizya* upon the Hindus, while other schools are of opinion that there is no other alternative for them but death or Islam."

The choice that Alā-ud-dīn offered to the Hindus was to be hewers of wood and drawers of water, the helots of the empire. They had only enough left to them to eke out a bare subsistence ; they could neither ride a horse, nor dress decently, nor bear arms, nor even chew betel. Their women had to seek service in Musalman households out of sheer penury. 'At my command,' Alā-ud-dīn boasted, 'they are ready to creep into holes like mice.'

General Expropriation :

(4) The policy of expropriation in order to curb individual prosperity, beyond what was safe for the state to allow, was general rather than confined to the Hindus. No doubt, the Sultan is reported to have declared that 'the Hindus will never become submissive and obedient till they are reduced to poverty' ; but his entire revenue policy was based upon the principle that most of his subjects, whether Hindu or Muslim, 'shall not be allowed to accumulate hoards of property.' Balban had attempted a general resumption of fiefs in the Punjab, but failed despite his plan of generous compensation. Alā-ud-dīn, however, made confiscation of accumulated reserves al-

most universal, and yet succeeded. Perhaps he was encouraged by his experiment with the Jalāli nobles. Then again, the reduction of properties being not invidious, no one could make a special grievance of it.

'The Sultan,' says Baranī, 'ordered that wherever there was a village held by proprietory right (*milk*), in free gift (*in'am*), or as a religious endowment (*wakf*), it should by one stroke of the pen be brought under the exchequer. The people were pressed and amerced and money was exacted from them on every kind of pretext. Many were left without any money, till at length it came to pass that, excepting *Maliks* and *Amirs*, officials, Multanis (*i.e.*, large traders from *Multan*) and bankers, no one possessed even a trifle in cash. So rigorous was the confiscation that, beyond a few thousand *tankās*, all the pensions, grants in land, and endowments in the country were appropriated. The people were all so absorbed in obtaining the means of living that the very name of rebellion was never mentioned.'

Control of Commodities and Prices :

(5) As a corollary to the enforced poverty of the subjects, it was found necessary to regulate the prices of commodities, to ensure that 'just sufficient shall be left to them from year to year of corn, milk and curds.' This was at first adopted as a war measure under the stress of the Mongol invasions. A large army was found necessary for frontier defence, and it could not be maintained without excessive costs. Alā-ud-dīn, shrewd practical man of business that he was, thought of a measure wherewith armaments could be increased to the required extent without, at the same time, unduly burdening the exchequer. The cost of subsistence was not to be allowed to fluctuate according to the law of demand and supply, but permanently and rigidly fixed. The salary of a soldier was to be 234 *tankās*, with an additional allowance of 78 *tankās* for those who kept two horses. Within this amount he was to support his family and furnish himself with horse and arms throughout the year. Hence, the Sultan enacted that the price of necessaries shall be in accordance with the tariff determined by the government. Wheat was to sell at no more than $7\frac{1}{2}$ *jitals* per *maund* ; barley at 4 *jitals* ; paddy (unhusked rice) at 5 *jitals* ; etc. The price of sugar was fixed at $1^1/_3$ *jitals* per *seer*, and unrefined *gūr* at $^1/_3$ *jital* per *seer* ; salt was 2 *jitals* per *maund*. Nothing was missed in the tariff : vegetables, fruits, oil, as well as, caps, shoes, combs and needles ; even the slaves and marketable girls were priced. A maid-servant cost 5 to 12 *tankās*, a concubine 20 to

40 *tankās* ; a slave-labourer 10 to 15 *tankās,* and a handsome page 20 to 30 *tankās.* It is interesting to note that horses of all grades sold better : first class 100 to 120 *tankās* ; second class 80 to 90 *tankās* ; third class 65 to 70 *tankās.* Even ponies fetched 10 to 25 *tankās* a head. Cows and goats were relatively cheaper : a cow being 3 to 4 *tankās,* and a she-goat 10 to 14 *jitals.*

To meet emergencies, grain was stocked in state granaries, to furnish which the revenue in the *khālsa* villages of the Doab was collected in kind. Hence, even in times of drought, no scarcity of food was felt. No producer within 100 *kos* of the Doab was allowed to store corn even to the extent of 10 *maunds,* all surplus being compulsorily sold to licensed dealers at tariff rates. During periods of scarcity in the country, grain was supplied from the central market, no more than half a *maund* being sold to a single purchaser.

The essence of this system of political economy, as Moreland summarises, consisted in (1) control of supplies, and (2) control of transport, with (3) rationing of consumption when necessary, the whole system resting on (4) a highly organised intelligence, and (5) drastic punishment of evasions. "This summary, it will be seen," he writes, "applies almost precisely to the system of control which was elaborated in England during the years of war, and which was proved by experience to be effective." Baranī accounts for the success of Alā-ud-dīn's market regulation by (1) the strict enforcement of the law, (2) the vigorous collection of revenue, (3) the scarcity of metallic currency, and (4) the zeal of the officers who acted in fear of the Sultan. A glimpse of the official machinery will convince the reader of the truthfulness of these observations.

The Steel-frame at Work :

The whole system was under a comptroller of Markets, known as the *Shahna-i-mandi,* assisted by an efficient staff of subordinate officers. He kept a *daftar* or register of licensed dealers, and no trader who was not so registered was allowed to transact any business. A well organised body of informers kept the Sultan in touch with the working of the markets from day to day. On one or two occasions the Superintendent of Markets was himself punished with 21 stripes for presuming to suggest a little enhancement in the price of corn. If people got crushed in the crowd for want of traffic control, the negligence was as well visited upon the Superintendent.

The punishments for all violations of the tariff were Draconic. For instance, a vendor who gave a diminished weight of a commodity for the scheduled price had to make good the difference, when detected, Shylock-wise, with an equal quantity of flesh from his own body.

The land revenue was increased by Alā-ud-dīn to 50 per cent. of the produce ; and the revenue officers who were found guilty of accepting bribes were punished 'with sticks, pincers, the rack, imprisonment and chains.' This made the officials so vigilant and strict in their duties that they came to be regarded as more deadly than the plague ; "and to be a government clerk was a disgrace worse than death, insomuch that no Hindu would marry his daughter to such a man."

Tyranny ends in Turmoil :

The twenty years' tyranny of Alā-ud-din at last came to an end with his death on 2 January 1316. His constitution had been undermined both by his incontinence and the high pressure at which all tyrants are called upon to work. "His ill-health made him more suspicious and irritable than ever ; and, like most people who distrust the bulk of mankind, he was the dupe of one artful individual." Malik Kāfur, Alā-ud-dīn's evil genius, so wrought upon him during his illness that the irascible autocrat was induced to imprison both his heir-apparent Khizr Khān and his mother on a charge of conspiracy. The infant Shihāb-ud-dīn Umar was nominated successor, instead, that the Naib, acting as regent, might have all the power in his own hands. Meanwhile rebellions broke out on all sides : Harapāla, Shankerdeo's successor at Deogiri, was among the first to declare himself independent and drive out the Muslim garrisons in his territory ; Rāṇa Hamīr of Chitor likewise ousted the Mlechchas from the sacred soil of Rājasthān ; and Gujarat followed suit.

"The paroxysms of rage produced by a succession of these tidings increased the king's sufferings, and soon brought him to the brink of the grave. His end is said to have been accelerated by poison, administered by Cāfūr." (Elphinstone)

Though Alā-ud-dīn 'could not read or write a letter,' as Baranī tells us, and 'was bad-tempered, obstinate and hard-hearted,' 'fortune befriended him, and his schemes were generally successful.' "Though he might be wrong-headed and disdainful of the law,"

Lane-Poole remarks, Alā-ud-dīn, "was a man of sense and determination, who knew his own mind, saw the necessities of the situation, met them by his own methods, and carried out those methods, with presistence." The result was, in the words of Ferishta, so long as Alā-ud-dīn was active, he 'executed justice with such rigour, that robbery and theft, formerly so common, were not heard of in the land. The traveller slept secure on the highway, and the merchant carried his commodities in safety from the sea of Bengal to the mountains of Kabul and from Telingana to Kashmir.' But, 'fortune, as usual, proved fickle ; and destiny 'drew her poniard to destroy him." No soner was Alā-ud-dīn laid in the dust than the kingdom was plunged in chaos.

Three Rulers in Four Years :

Malik Kāfur, "the extent of whose abilities" according to Elphinstone, "was equalled by the depravity of his principles," arrogated all authority to himself, and set about the ruthless business of extirpating all rivals. The eyes of Prince Khizr Khān and his brother Shādi Khān, who were both in prison, were 'cut out from the sockets, with a razor, like slices of melon.' All others who were likely to prove obstacles to the Regent were put out of action one by one. But, when the turn of another son of the late Sultan, Mubārak, came, the usurper was forestalled and put to death. Thus died ignominiously the first Muslim conqueror of South India, within a few weeks of his master's death.

The short reign of Mubārak (1316-20 A.D.) who then ascended the throne at Delhi was typical. He began like his father distributing largesse in order to win popularity. Then he abrogated all the stringent regulations of Alā-ud-dīn, and set about restoring order in the kingdom. Ain-ul-Multānī was sent to Gujarat to put down the rebellion in that province, after which the Sultan's father-in-law, Zafar Khān, was appointed its governor. In 1317 A.D. Mubārak himself set out for the Deccan, and defeating Harapāla flayed him alive. Then appointing Malik Ekalakī governor at Deogiri, he returned to Delhi. His favourite Khusru Khān, another low born Hindu convert like the *hazār-dināri* was at the same time despatched to South India. Khusru, on a small scale, repeated the exploits of his predecessor at Madura and Wārangal, but instead of loyally

returning to the capital, meditated making himself independent master in the peninsula.

Meanwhile, Mubārak, on his return to Delhi found sufficient work to engage him in 'cutting off the tallest poppies.' During his short absence, a plot had been hatched to assassinate him, and as a matter of fact, a ten-year old son of Khizr Khān had been proclaimed Sultan, with the title of Shams-ud-dīn Mahmūd Shāh (1318-19 A.D.). Coins of this parvenu are still extant. Mubārak had all the conspirators seized and executed. Even the three luckless and blinded brothers, Khizr Khān, Shādi Khān, and Umar Khān, who were rotting in their prison cells at Gwalior, were not spared. And for an unknown reason, Zafar Khān, Mubārak's own father-in-law, too, was summoned from Gujarat and put to death likewise. Having accomplished this stern detergence, Mubārak addressed himself to wine and women. "The sudden removal of all the harsh restraints which the people had suffered (under the old reign)," as Sir Wolseley Haig has observed, "produced an outburst of licentiousness similar to that which had disgraced the short reign of Kaiqubād, and once again the king's example encouraged the extravagance of his subjects, for his morals were no better than his father's and from the earliest days of his reign he was entirely under the influence of a vile favourite." That favourite, as we saw, was 'hatching the egg of ambition in his brain' in South India. Nevertheless, the enamoured Sultan recalled him to Court for his pleasures, despite the reports of Khusru Khān's designs having previously reached him. The wretched Mubārak after his elder brother's execution had also appropriated his beautiful Hindu wife Deval Devi to his own *harem*. The licentious orgies that followed have been, perhaps, paralleled only by those of Louis XV in France and the Mughal Emperor Jahāndar Shāh in this country. We need not befoul our pages with their description.

Caught in the midst of these snares the son of the great autocrat Alā-ud-dīn, who had presumed to call himself *al-Wāsig-billāh*, the Vicegerent of the God of heaven and earth, was foully murdered by his own favourite Khusru Khān, who then ascended the throne, proclaiming himself Nāsir-ud-dīn Khusru Shāh.

The Dance of Death :

The new emperor of Delhi was an outcaste *Dher* from western

India. He had been nominally converted and called Hasan thereafter. His infatuated master, Mubārak, made him his chief minister under the title by which he is more familiarly known. His exploits in South India have already been recounted. His real office had been that of a prostitute. The first result of his usurpation was the appropriation of the twice dishonoured and ruthful Deval Devi. During the confusion that was created by Mubārak's murder, the execrable followers of Khusru had already invaded the sanctity of the royal *harem*, murdered the children of the ruling family, and outraged the women.

It is not a little surprising that a number of the old officials received titles at the hands of such a wretch. Perhaps the Khaljī theory of kingship was responsible for their ready acquiescence or they were merely biding their time. Thus Wahīd-ud-dīn Quraishī was entitled Tāj-ul-Mulk and retained as minister. Ain-ul-Mulk Multānī received the titles of 'Ālam Khān and Amīr-ul-Umrā. Fakhr-ud-dīn Muhammad Juna, son of the powerful Ghāzi Malik the hero of the frontier who scared away the Mongols under Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī, and the future Muhammad Tughlak, was appointed Master of the Horse. But the latter effected his escape to his father at Dipalpur rather than countenance what was going on at Delhi. Here the new Sultan throwing off his light veneer of Islam at once inaugurated a reign of persecution of the followers of the 'true faith.' "Mosques were defiled and destroyed and copies of the scriptures of Islam were used as seats and stools." under these circumstances Ain-ul-Mulk and the other Muslim nobles who appeared to have reconciled themselves to the new regime, turned against Khusru and his vile supporters. Ghāzī Malik and his son Juna, having gathered a large army in the Punjab, presently marched towards the capital. Khusru made a desperate effort to win support from all and sundry by scattering the royal treasures among them, and, after a brief but fierce struggle, finally tried to save himself by flight. Yet, Nemesis discovered him lurking in a garden and 'dispatched him to hell.' Brought before Ghāzi Malik he was promptly beheaded. The victor found himself in Jalāl-ud-dīn Khaljī's strange predicament. Entering the Palace of the Thousand Pillars, he "wept as he beheld the scene of destruction of his old master's family." Casting about in vain for a legitimate survivor to be placed on the throne

of Alā-ud-dīn, he was himself proclaimed King by the army and nobility as Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughlak Shāh, on 8 September, 1320.

SOME RELEVANT DATES

A.D.	
1321-51	Muhammad Tughlak rules at Delhi ; Empire extends over nearly all India.
1326-7	Foundation of Daulatābad.
1329-32	Currency experiment of M. Tughlak.
1334-42	Ibn Battuta in India.
1336	City of Vijayanagara founded.
1337-8	Accession of Shāh Mir, first Muslim ruler of Kashmir.
1338	Independence of Bengal.
1342	Prolonged famine in India.
1343	Death of Harihara I of Vijayanagara.
1347	Foundation of the Bahmani Kingdom in the Deccan ; Alā-ud-dīn Bahman Shāh up to 1358.
1348	Black Death in England decimates nearly half the population.
1351-88	Reign of Fīrūz Shāh Tughlak.
1387-95	Famine in the Deccan.
1394-97	Two rival Sultans reigning at Delhi simultaneously.
1396	Independence of Gujarat.
1398-99	Timūr's invasion of India.
1399-1414	Anarchy.

CHAPTER VI

SECOND EMPIRE OF THE CRESCENT : TUGHLAK

Alā-ud-dīn's Imperial Legacy :

Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī was the first Muslim Emperor of India. During his reign, for the first time, the Crescent dominated over the whole country from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin and from sea to sea. He was also the first Muslim ruler of India to make a bold experiment in administration. Balban had done little beyond consolidating his kingdom and maintaining order therein. What little of government there was, under the greatest of the Slave Sultans, was of a primitive character. Suppression of rebellion, eradication of robbery, and defence of the realm against foreign invaders were the primary tasks which absorbed all the energies of Balban. Alā-ud-dīn no doubt reaped all the benefits of this most essential spade-work. But he was also an innovater. However crude his autocracy, and whatever fate his dynasty might have immediately suffered, his administrative system supplied the foundation on which all later Muslim rulers in India built. According to Dr. Tripathi, from whom we have quoted more than once, " The Khiljis had made two contributions to kingship. They showed that kingship was not a (1) monopoly of any privileged class, but that it was within the reach of those who had the power and ability to hold it....The second contribution made by the Khiljis was that kingship could exist with-(2) out any special religious support and that the outlook of a king was very different from that of the clergy. This was the greatest contribution of ' Alā-ud-dīn."

Model Muslim Monarch :

Ghāzi Malik, the Warden of the Marches, who had stoutly defended the kingdom against the recurring Mongol incursions during the reign of Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī, and delivered the throne from the filthy Khusru, proved himself within the few years that were left to him (1320-25 A.D.) a model Muslim monarch in every sense of the

term. He belonged to a Turkish stock of adventurers who had settled in the Punjab and married among the natives, possibly Jats, and were known as Karauna Tughlaks. "Born of an Indian mother," Dr. Ishwari Prasad has observed, "Ghazi Malik typified in his character the salient features of the two races : the modesty and mildness of the Hindu and the virility and vigour of the Turk." No better evidence of his energy, aged though he was, could be cited than the swiftness with which he overthrew the usurper and pacified the capital ; "within forty days his sovereignty was everywhere acknowledged." The tears that he shed at the Red Palace were not the senile drops of Jalāl-ud-dīn but the genuine mark of his feeling for the extirpation, at the hands of infidels, of his late master's family. His loyalty was deeper than tears, for he laid the coping-stone on the work begun by Alā-ud-dīn. "The trusty warden of the marches," as Lane--Poole has said, "proved a just, high-minded and vigorous king."

The first task of Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughlak, or Tughlak Shāh I as he is more familiarly called, was to win the full confidence of all the nobles and officers, and then to restore order in the Empire. The way in which he accomplished this showed both his statesmanship and his alacrity. The low-born supporters of Khusru were of course ruthlessly exterminated, but the other nobles and officers who had in any way acquiesced in the usurpation were more leniently treated. Even those who had received the usurper's gold were given the chance of reimbursing the treasury in easy instalments after retaining a year's salary for themselves.

During the anarchical interlude between the last days of Alā-ud-dīn and the accession of Tughlak Shāh (1316-20 A.D.) the Empire had been shaken to its foundations. Mubārak had, indeed, acted with celerity in the first two years of his reign and reduced Gujarat, the Deccan and Telingana once again to submission. But during the next two years of licentiousness and rioting which followed, more was lost, perhaps, than had been secured by Mubārak and Khusru. (1) In the Punjab, owing to the eagle-eyes and talons of Ghāzi Malik, imperial authority continued to be exercised against all the turbulent elements that composed that province. (2) In Gujarat, after the recall and murder of Zafar Khān by his erratic son-in-law Mubārak (1318 A.D.), though Anhilwārā continued to be the headquarters of an imperial governor, owing to the determined resistance of the Hindu

chiefs, the Muslims " possessed little more than the encamping ground of their armies." (3) In Rajputāna and Mālwa, the Rajputs threw the Musalmans over the walls of the fortress of Chitor and reasserted their independence. (4) In the Deccan, Rāja Harapāla had been overthrown and a Muslim governor appointed in his place ; hence nominal allegiance to Delhi continued. (5) In Telingana and the south, although Khusru had repeated the exploits of Malik Kāfur, Pratāparudradeva II recovered his independence in the wake of the conqueror's return to Delhi. (6) Bengal was still under the descendants of Balban, and Alā-ud-dīn had not formally annexed their kingdom.

Reduction of Wārangal : The new Sultan began with the most urgent among the insurgent provinces, viz., Telingana. For Pratāparudra was growing too powerful and had repeatedly shown his insubordination. Besides, the final subjugation of that distant Hindu kingdom would have a salutary effect upon all others, and also serve to satisfy the conscience of the Ghāzi. The responsible task was entrusted to the crown-prince, Juna or Ulugh Khān, the future Muhammad Tughlak. But the siege of Wārangal demonstrated that its reduction was not an easy job. To add to the inherent difficulties of the endeavour rumour bruited that Tughlak Shāh had died at Delhi leaving the throne vacant. Nevertheless, the army did not appear to be ready to accept Ulugh Khān as Ghiyās-ud-dīn's successor. Confusion followed, and Ulugh had to beat a hurried retreat to Delhi, to pacify his still surviving father against the possible misunderstanding caused by his presumptive bid for the throne. Father and son were evidently soon reconciled to each other, for Ulugh Khān returned next year to Wārangal and completed his arduous task of subduing Telingana (1322 A.D.). Pratāparudra surrendered with family after a heroic resistance ; all arrears of tribute were collected ; the whole country was divided into smaller provinces to facilitate government ; and Wārangal was renamed Sultanpur. The policy was inaugurated of appointing Muslim governors in place of refractory Hindu feudatories. The victorious Prince returned to Delhi, subduing Bidar and Jājnagar *en route*, and great rejoicings were held at the capital to celebrate this triumph to the arms of Islam.

The Bengal Campaign : A succession dispute among the grandsons of Bughra Khān in Bengal invited imperial intervention from Delhi in 1324 A.D. This time Ghiyās-ud-dīn marched to Lakhnauti

in person, leaving the capital in the charge of the Crown Prince. Events showed that this was a fateful arrangement. Ghiyās-ud-dīn indeed was eminently successful in his campaign. Nāsir-ud-dīn, the more submissive brother, was reinstated in place of Bahādur, and a baton and canopy were bestowed upon him as a mark of imperial favour. On his way back, the Rāja of Tirhut who opposed him was put down and Tirhut placed under a Muslim governor. But treachery lay in wait for the victorious old Sultan in his own capital. The Crown Prince had arranged a grand reception for his father in a pavilion specially erected for the purpose at some distance from the city. In the midst of the festivities, when Ghiyās-ud-dīn was a little separated from the rest, together with a favourite younger son of his, the whole structure collapsed over their heads, and father and son met an unexpected death. When the *debris* was cleared, the old man's body was found bending over that of his son, as though he had tried to protect him from the calamity. The entire tragedy, on the statement of Ibn Battuta and other circumstantial evidence, has been ascribed to the designs of the Crown Prince whose earlier attempt to assume sovereignty in Telingana had been foiled. This occurred about February 1325, and Ulugh Khān ascended the throne, three days after, in the fort of Tughlakābad erected by his father. Thus began and ended the brief reign of Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughlak who, like Jalāl-ud-dīn Fīrūz Khaljī, founded a new dynasty at an advanced age only to make room for a more famous, ambitious and impatient successor. But there ends the parallel between the first Khaljī and the first Tughlak ; in all other respects the two were a contrast to each other.

Jalāl-ud-dīn's reign was weak, senile and fatuous ; Ghiyās-ud-dīn's was strong, virile and fruitful. In essential respects the former resembles the Mughal Bahādur Shāh I ; the latter reminds us of Sher Shāh Sūr. Especially in administrative policy Tughlak Shāh I must be considered the prototype of the later Sher Shāh. But, of course, no exact congruence is to be sought for. Historical parallels are suggestive rather than photographic.

Ghiyās-ud-dīn's Government : In the words of Dr. Ishwari Prasad, " No structural changes were made in the constitution of government ; no new organisations were undertaken as they were under his illustrious son Muhammad Tughlaq." But " his administration was based upon the principles of justice and moderation, and

in the enforcement of his regulations he was guided by his desire to advance the public weal." (*History of Qaraunah Turks*, vol. I, p. 49).

Finance was the test of the situation. Both Mubārak and Khusru had squandered like prodigals. Ghiyās-ud-dīn was consequently faced with a depleted treasury. He instituted a searching enquiry and adopted stringent measures for the recovery of all ill-gotten wealth. In venial cases, however, as pointed out before, he permitted reimbursement in easy instalments. "To prevent corruption and embezzlement he paid his officers well and promoted to high rank only those who gave proof of their loyalty and devotion. In the distribution of rewards he was guided by "considerations of rank, merit and length of service and avoided all invidious distinctions. He was not a whimsical despot but a sagacious and thoughtful ruler who always consulted his councillors in important matters of state."

Ghiyās-ud-dīn's revenue policy illustrates his statesmanship more than anything else he did. He wisely disallowed the system of farming which had long been in vogue under the feudal conditions of early Muslim rule. The rapacious farmers of revenue were not even permitted to approach the *Diwan-i-Wizārat*. Though the assessment of Alā-ud-dīn remained unaltered, the excesses of the revenue-collectors were brought under control. The *amirs* and *maliks* were not allowed to take as their fee more than 1|20 to 1|15 of the revenues of their provinces, and the *kārkūns* and *mutsarrifs* were permitted a perquisite not exceeding 5 to 10 per thousand. Even where a slight enhancement of revenue was justified, Baranī tells us, 'The *khirāj* was to increase gradually over a number of years and not all at once, *for by doing so the country suffers and the path of progress is blocked.*' We do not come across such tender consideration for the country until the days of Sher Shāh Sūr two centuries later. "The *Jagirdars* and *Hākims* were asked to be careful in the realisation of the *khirāj* so that the *khūts* and *muqaddams* may not impose any additional burden upon the people besides the state dues. . . . Large remissions of revenue were made in times of drought and the defaulters were treated with great generosity. . . . No man was to be held in bondage for the sake of money and every facility was provided by the state to enable the people to meet their obligations without any discomfort or vexation."

The same minute attention was bestowed by the Sultan on all

departments of the state. A system of poor-relief was organised, and the judicial and police arrangements were so efficiently managed that, in the trite phraseology of the Muslim chroniclers, 'the wolf dared not seize upon the lamb and the lion and the deer drank at one stream.' An old veteran himself, Ghiyās-ud-dīn was affable towards the meanest soldier in the army and eminently succeeded in improving its *morale* and efficiency. The system of Alā-ud-dīn according to which horses were branded and identified in a detailed muster-roll was continued, to avoid chicanery such as Balban had encountered among the Punjab fief-holders ; and "a most efficient postal service" was restored.

Despite his easy success and sudden elevation to imperial authority, Ghāzi Malik retained his old simplicity and self-discipline in life. Though stern like Balban and Alā-ud-dīn, there was in all he did a genuine touch of humanity. A man of action schooled in war though he was, he could still patronise great poets like Amir Khusrau. Warned of the fate of Alā-ud-dīn and Mubārak he never indulged in any sensual pleasures and shrank instinctively from 'handsome beardless boys'—the vice of his age. Masterful and puritanical, Ghiyās-ud-dīn avoided the tyranny as well as the pomp and pageantry of Balban and Aurangzeb in public life and state functions. "During his brief reign he did much to wipe out the disgrace which had befallen the empire of Delhi, to reorganise the administration which had fallen out of gear, and to re-establish the power (and prestige) of the monarchy, which had been reduced to a nullity during the Khusruite regime." He fully merited the description of him by his own poet-laureate Amir Khusrau, who wrote :

> Wisdom and prudence in all that he did were revealed ;
> The faculties' hoods seemed under his crown concealed.

The Enigmatic Sultan Muhammad :

The character of the parricide Prince Juna Khān, who ascended the throne of Delhi in February or March 1325, as Muhammad Tughlak, and ruled during the next twenty-six years (till 1351 A.D.), has exercised the minds of scholars ever since. His detractors have depicted him as the very devil incarnate ; while his too sympathetic critics have discovered in him "unquestionably the ablest man among the crowned heads of the middle ages." There could be but little doubt that Muhammad Tughlak was a great enigma to his own age

and has remained the same to this day. Baranī and Ibn Battuta were both his contemporaries and have left on record very vivid impressions of what they saw and felt. Whilst they appreciated and even admired the numerous natural talents and accomplishments of the undoubtedly gifted monarch, they unsparingly chronicled even what could not well be assimilated with the better side of his character. Whatever their personal bias, therefore (there are few persons without it), we should be thankful to them for leaving behind them testimony which V. A. Smith rightly considered "is extraordinarily detailed and accurate." Making due allowance for personal colour it is not difficult to find in their pages a true picture of both the man and his times. To do this it is not necessary either to vilify Muhammad Tughlak as a monster of iniquity or to embark on a learned apologia for what was *prima facie* indefensible in him. A detached examination of the uncontroverted facts of the reign must precede any judgment that might be proffered on their basis.

A Favourable Start : The first thing to be noted is the very favourable start that Muhammad had in his career as king. Despite his reprehensible antecedents in securing the throne for himself the immediate situation at the time of his accession was anything but hostile. "He followed a deeply revered father, and he had a high reputation of his own. He was known to be a great general, and his private life was temperate and even austere. All India was quiet, and the distant provinces had been recovered." Nothing more helpful could have been desired even by a talented prince like Muhammad Tughlak. "He was," besides, "perfect in the humanities of his day, a keen student of Persian poetry—the Latin of Indian education,—a master of style, supremely eloquent in an age of rhetoric, a philosopher, trained in logic and Greek metaphysics, with whom scholars feared to argue, a mathematician and a lover of science. The contemporary writers extol his skill in composition and his exquisite calligraphy, and his beautiful coinage bears witness to his critical taste in the art of engrossing the Arabic character, which he read and understood though he could not speak the language fluently." Such was the personality that Prince Muhammad brought to bear on his daring plans whose stupendous failure was to earn for him the dubious sobriquet of 'the wisest fool in Crescentdom.'

Oppression in the Doab : In the fashion of all usurpers of the age Muhammad's coronation was attended with lavish gifts of gold

that naturally depleted the treasury which had been replenished by the practical wisdom of his father. This necessitated enhancement of the revenue which was also needed to meet the grandiose schemes of conquest which Muhammad had in mind. The experiment was made in the rich province of the Doab. Certain cesses were also added to the land-revenue which was itself increased. The consequence was that, in the words of Baranī, 'the backs of the rayats were broken. Those who were rich became rebels ; the lands were ruined and cultivation was arrested. Grain became dear, the rains were deficient, so famine became general. It lasted for years, and thousands upon thousands of people perished.' Making all deductions for the element of exaggeration which might have crept into Baranī's description owing to his own native-land of Baran having suffered, Dr. Ishwari Prasad nevertheless admits that "Unfortunately, this measure was carried out at a time when a severe famine was prevailing in the Doab, and the distress of the people was greatly aggravated by its disastrous effects. But this does not exonerate the Sultan altogether from blame ; for his officials continued to levy taxes at the enhanced rate with the utmost rigour, and made no allowance for famine. . . . The remedy came too late."

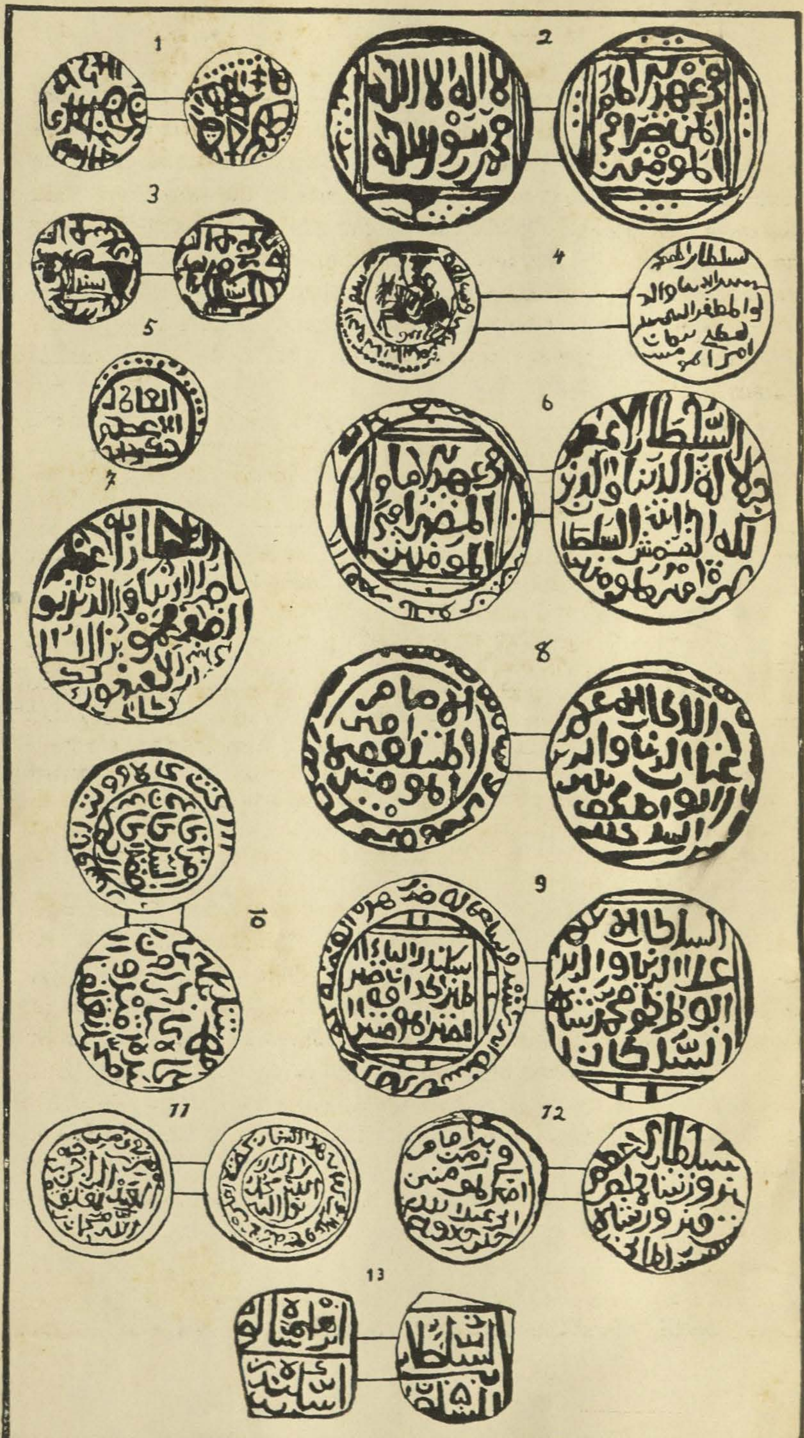
Delhi to Deogiri : Then came the famous transference of his capital from Delhi to Deogiri renamed Daulatābad (1326-27 A.D.). There was nothing preposterous in the idea itself. Capitals have been shifted even in modern times of greater facilities for communication. The Empire had grown too vast to be easily controlled from Delhi. Daulatābad, as Baranī observes, 'had a central situation, nearly equidistant (700 miles) from Delhi, Gujarat, Lakhnauti, Tilang, and other chief places.' But the execution of the idea in the manner it was done made Muhammad ridiculous.

'Without consultation or weighing the *pros* and *cons*,' says Baranī, 'he brought ruin on Delhi which for 170 or 180 years had grown in prosperity and rivalled Baghdad and Cairo. The city with its *sarais* and suburbs and villages spread over four or five leagues : all was destroyed (i.e. deserted). Not a cat or a dog was left. Troops of the inhabitants with their families were forced to remove, broken-hearted ; many perished on the road, and those who reached Deogiri, unable to endure their exile, pined to death. All round Deogiri, an infidel land, spread graveyards of Muslims. The Sultan was bounteous to the emigrants, both on the journey and arrival ; but they were tender and could not suffer exile. They laid down their heads in that heathen land, and of the multitudes few lived to return to their native home.'

The result is better imagined than described. Muhammad realised his great blunder, permitted the survivors to return to Delhi and left Daulatābad "a monument of misdirected energy" as Lane-Poole has called it. Coins bearing the proud inscription 'the Metropolis of Islam' commemorated the colossal experiment. When Ibn Battuta visited the capital in 1333 A.D. Delhi was being strenuously rehabilitated, but it was a long time before the imperial city recovered from the effects of its historic evacuation.

Mongol Invasion : One of the first fruits of the desertion of Delhi was an invasion of the Punjab by the Mongol Tarmāshirin (1328-29 A.D.). Ghiyās-ud-dīn had so fortified the western frontiers that the Mongols dared not venture into India so long as he was alive. But recent happenings in this country were too tempting for the opportunity to be missed by the ever watchful marauders. The news of Muhammad's *coup d'etat* which established him on the throne must certainly have reached them, as also of the discontent and sufferings caused by famine and oppression in the Doab and the transference of the capital to the distant Deccan. The moment was therefore ripe for another adventure. "Having subjugated Lamghan, Multan and the northern provinces, the Mughals (we might call them so hereafter) harried the entire plain extending from Multan and Lahore to the outskirts of Delhi. The districts of Samana, Indari and Badāon also suffered at their hands." Muhammad had been warned of this danger when he determined upon the transference of the capital, but he was impervious to argument. Now when the storm actually burst he had no remedy but to buy off the marauders as Æthelred 'the unready' had done with the Danes in England.

The Currency Experiment : All the events hitherto narrated had but one effect : the prodigality of the coronation, the fruitlessness of the Doab exactions, the famine, the expenditure incurred in the transference and retransference of the capital, the cost of rehabilitating Delhi, and finally, the price of keeping off the Mughals, —all contributed to make the Exchequer anæmic. The dilettante Sultan was resourceful in ideas and he brought forth a new scheme of juggling with the currency,—not prices and commodities like Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī. Great praise has been bestowed upon Muhammad for his improvement of the crude coinage of his predecessors ; he has been styled a 'Prince of Moneyers.' Without challenging this appreciation which was well merited so far as other aspects of Muham-



Coins of the Sultans

mad's numismatic reform were concerned, we have here to deal with only one innovation, viz. the introduction of a token currency. This experiment should be judged on its own merits without clouding the issue with other complimentary achievements in the same field. He had earlier introduced a gold *dinar* weighing 201·6 grains, and revived the silver *adali* of 144 grains. To facilitate smaller dealings he had devised the *dokani* or *sultani*, etc. The illustrations given elsewhere in this book will show how artistic the design, execution and finish of Muhammad's coinage was compared with that of the earlier Sultans of Delhi.

It is, indeed, " in his rôle as a Prince of Moneyers," Thomas writes, " that Muhammad bin Tughlak claims our peculiar attention. His mintages are instructive both in the novelty and variety of their types, admirable in the artistic perfection of their design and execution, and especially significant in their reflex of the individuality of the Monarch himself, marking as they do, the various phases of his career—his early wealth and reckless profusion, its resulting poverty, which he attempted to meet by a forced currency, and equally his ready return to money payments on its ascertained failure. Next in order, they exemplify the doubts and difficulties concerning his own title to the throne, unconfirmed as it was by Pontifical authority, which he remedied by the curious process of the omission of his own name and the substitution of that of an Egyptian scion of the house of Abbás, who, as chance would have it, was already in his grave. So important, indeed, did he consider all matters connected with the public currency that one of the earliest acts of his reign was to remodel the coinage, to readjust its divisions to the altered relative values of the precious metals and to originate new and more exact representatives of the subordinate circulation."

Mr. C. J. Brown, agreeing with Thomas, confirms : Muhammad Tughlak, " has not unjustly been called by Thomas ' The Prince of Moneyers.' Not only do his coins surpass those of his predecessors in execution and especially in calligraphy, but his large output of gold, the number of his issues of all denominations, the interest of the inscriptions, reflecting his character and activities, his experiments with the coinage, particularly his forced currency, entitle him to a place among the greatest moneyers of history." (*The Coins of India*, p. 73.)

Granting all these excellences, what was the significance of his token coins ?

' A third project,' writes Baranī, ' also did great havoc : this was the issue of copper money to be used as [standard] currency, like gold and silver. This edict turned the house of every Hindu (?) into a mint, and the

Indians of the provinces coined lacs and crores of copper coins, with which they paid their tribute and bought horses and arms and fine things of all sorts. The rais, the village headmen, and landowners grew rich on these copper coins but the state was impoverished. In no long time distant countries would only accept the copper *tanka* as metal, and in places where reverence for the edict prevailed the gold *tanka* rose to be worth a hundred copper *tankas.* Every goldsmith struck copper coins in his workshop, and the treasury was crammed with them. They fell so low, that they were no more valuable than pebbles or potsherds. Trade being disrupted, the Sultan repealed his edict, and in great wrath proclaimed that all the copper coins would be redeemed in gold or silver at the treasury. Thousands brought them for exchange and their heaps rose up in Taghlakābad like mountains.'

Dr. Ishwari Prasad has been at considerable pains to exonerate the Sultan from charges of eccentricity, greed and insolvency. The integrity of the well-meaning Sultan may not be impugned ; the solvency of the imperial treasury was undoubtedly demonstrated by the return without break-down to the old currency, despite the heavy drain the entire operation must have involved. But Baranī's statement that the experiment was due to two causes, viz. (1) the need of money to maintain the great army of conquest (370,000 troops), and (2) the deficiency in the treasury caused by the Sultan's lavish gifts, etc., cannot be challenged. The relative scarcity of silver might also be accepted as a contributory incentive to the substitution of copper and brass tokens, though it is difficult to understand the "serious problem, created by the *scarcity of silver and its depreciation, consequent upon the influx of gold* from the Deccan into Hindustan."

Under these circumstances, " To reinforce the desire to multiply the currency," Dr. Ishwari Prasad tells us, " there was probably the love of experiment, for the Sultan who was a man of an original cast of mind, well-versed in the arts and sciences of the age, may have felt a powerful impulse to embark upon this *experiment in a scientific spirit.* The royal exhortations which accompanied the introduction of the currency and *the subsequent behaviour of the Sultan effectively rebut the charge of eccentricity,* which has been brought against him by modern writers." The Sultan certainly was not lacking in either the strength of will or authority to enforce the decree once he determined upon it. He must have foreseen the possibility of public opposition, but, like a stern medieval despot, he felt himself strong enough to carry the measure through even in the teeth of

popular prejudice or resistance offered by the moneyed classes." Muhammad also had the positive and negative results of like experiments made by Kublai Khān in China and Gai Khātu in Persia, to encourage and warn him. Yet did he feel obliged to retrace his steps as hastily as he had taken them (1330-32 A.D.). Thomas has hit the nail on the head in observing, " There was no special machinery to mark the difference of the fabric of the royal mint and the handiwork of a moderately skilled artisan. Unlike the precautions taken to prevent the imitation of the Chinese paper notes, there was positively no check upon the authenticity of the copper token, and no limit to the power of production by the masses at large." In the face of such unscientific bungling by the Sultan, " who was a man of an original cast of mind, well-versed in the arts and sciences of the age," it is not a little surprising to find Dr. Ishwari Prasad blame the people of the fourteenth century in India for Muhammad's ignoring the necessary precautions that observation and common sense must have alike enjoined. " To the people at large in those days," he says, " brass was brass and copper was copper, however urgent the needs of the state." But we have already noted how according to Baranī the people despite their " conservative character " bought and sold ' horses and arms and fine things of all sorts ' as well as paid the tribute with those very tokens of brass and copper. In the light of these facts we might concur with Dr. Ishwari Prasad's own dictum : " In judging human affairs and analysing human motives the recondite is apt to be the fallacious as well as the obscure, and the simplest explanation is often the most correct and natural." He is perfectly right where he states, " The new currency exceeded the supply of gold and silver in circulation. Naturally, *when the inferior money was put upon the market in large quantities, the superior money was driven out of it through the operation of Gresham's law.*"

Anarchy Afoot : We must now turn to the political history of the reign. It is a sad tale of disruption. The first ten years of Muhammad's rule passed off without any serious portents of the coming dismemberment ; but between 1335 and 1351 A.D. the provinces fell off one after another : Telingana and Mysore, Bengal and the Deccan were lost in quick succession. Of the vast empire which included twenty-three provinces at the commencement, stretching from Sind and the Punjab in the west, to Bihar and Bengal in the east, and from the Himalayas in the north, to Mysore and

Madura in the south, only Hindustan proper and Gujarat nominally remained when Muhammad died. The story of this rapid dissolution may be briefly told.

Ma'bar : The earliest rebellion of consequence took place in 1335 A.D. in Ma'bar. Jalāl-ud-dīn Ahsan Shāh, who had been placed in charge of Ma'bar, taking advantage of the increasing embarrassments in the north raised the standard of revolt. Though famine and lawlessness prevailed in the vicinity of the capital, Muhammad was obliged to take the field in person. He marched to the south with a large army, but misfortune dogged his footsteps. Cholera decimated his men and the expedition ended in failure.

Bengal : Bengal followed in the wake of Telingana (1336-37 A.D.). Fakhrud-dīn, an armour-bearer of the governor of east Bengal, slew his master and usurped his authority. Kadr Khān, the governor of Lakhnauti, marching against him met with a similar fate, and the rebellious Fakhr-ud-din proclaimed himself independent. The helpless and much distracted Sultan could hardly raise a finger to recover the province. Bengal prospered under its usurper and became famous as 'hell crammed with good things.'

Oudh : Oudh was forced to rebel in 1340-41 A.D. Its governor, Ain-ul-Mulk Multani, whom we mentioned under Khusru Shāh, was a loyal officer. He was a great soldier as well as an accomplished man of letters. He had rendered eminent service to the Sultan in mitigating the severity of the famine on a former occasion. When Muhammad was at Swargadwārī, a town founded by him on the banks of the Ganges, during the great famine in Oudh, Ain-ul-Mulk sent him 70 to 80 *lakhs* of *tankās* worth of grain to relieve distress. He had also suppressed the revolt of Nizām Ma'in at Kara and proved his loyalty by flaying the rebel to death and sending his corpse to the capital. Despite all these services the old veteran was ordered into the Deccan, ostensibly to put down disturbances in that quarter, but suspected by Ain-ul-Mulk as a diplomatic transportation to strike at his growing power in Oudh. The Sultan persisting in his orders, the reluctant governor sought refuge in rebellion. However, the revolt was suppressed, the subordinates all executed, and Ain-ul-Mulk himself pardoned and made keeper of the royal gardens at Delhi.

Sind : In the following year (1342 A.D.) Muhammad had to march into Sind to put down brigandage which had grown to threat-

ening proportions. The miscreants were captured and forced to embrace Islam. Yet Muhammad's toils were not at an end. Famine, pestilence, rebellion and brigandage had devastated Hindustan for well over a decade, ending in utter exhaustion and the loss of the eastern provinces. When at last things appeared to be settling down to normal in the north, the southern parts of the empire were in revolt.

South India : Always a difficult charge to hold, the Deccan and South India could not be expected to remain quiescent during these troublous times. Madura had established an independent Sultanate in 1335 A.D. In the year following (1336 A.D.) were laid the foundations of the mightiest and the most glorious Hindu kingdom of medieval India, viz. Vijayanagara. Krishna Nāyaka, son of Pratāparudra Kākatiya, organised a revolt about 1343 A.D. Vīra Ballāla III so long as he was alive after Malik Kāfur's return to Delhi (1312-42 A.D.) had played a leading part in the resurgent Hindu movement of South India. His son, Ballāla IV, joined Krishna Nāyaka, Wārangal was captured, and its Muslim governor, Imād-ul-mulk, fled to Daulatābad. In the words of Ferishta, 'Belāl Deo and Krishna Naik both combined their forces and delivered Ma'bar and Dhorasamundar,....from Muslim control. On all sides the flames of war and rebellion were kindled and of the distant provinces nothing remained in the possession of the Sultan except Gujarat and Deogir.'

The Deccan : Even in these last named provinces troubles were fast brewing. Kutlugh Khān, the governor of Daulatābad, had long proved too good in his charge. His subordinates embezzled a large part of the public revenue. Muhammad's attempt to replace him with Ain-ul-Mulk Multani was foiled, as we have noted, by the latter's revolt. But the situation demanded urgent attention, and Kutlugh Khān was courteously recalled, Deogiri being tentatively placed in the charge of his brother Ālim-ul-Mulk assisted by four divisional officers. But the remedy proved worse than the disease. As Ferishta records, 'The people, disgusted at the removal of Qutlugh Khān, and the want of capacity displayed by the new administration, rebelled in all quarters and the country was devastated and depopulated in consequence.'

Mālwa : An unworthy vinter's son, Aziz Khummār by name, had been appointed governor of Mālwa and Dhār by Muhammad. He treated the *amirs* and nobles in his province with such high-

handedness that they were driven to rebel. The exasperated governor caught hold of no less than eighty of these contumacious persons and had them beheaded in front of his palace to make an example. This act of terrorism created such a panic among the rest that its repercussions were soon felt in the neighbouring provinces of Deogiri and Gujarat as well. The hated Aziz was caught in a blaze of rebellions and put to 'an ignominious death.'

Gujarat : The Sultan who could ill-brook such flagrant flouting of his authority marched into Gujarat in a fit of frenzy, and harried the land with fire and sword. Meanwhile Deogiri became a nest of rebellion. Muhammad consequently turned to the settlement of that province where Afghans, Turks and Hindus had alike made common cause against imperial authority. But no sooner he recovered Daulatābad from the rebels, than another formidable rising called him back to Gujarat. There a common shoe-maker and the slave of a Muslim nobleman, Taghi by name, had gathered around him all the forces of disorder and disaffection, both Hindu and Muslim, and occupied and plundered several places like Nehrwālā, Cambay, and Broach. When Sultan Muhammad came, however, the rebel chief was driven from pillar to post and at last hounded out of the province. After enjoying a brief respite, during which Muhammad restored Gujarat to something like normal conditions, he resumed the pursuit of the fugitive Taghi who had sought refuge in Sind. It was during this interval that the rebels in the Deccan recaptured Daulatābad, slew its governor Imād-ul-mulk (the Sultan's son-in-law), and raised their leader Hasan Kangu to the throne. The latter founded the new independent Muslim kingdom of Bahmani assuming the title of Alā-ud-dīn Bahman Shāh (1347 A.D.), as a counterpoise to the Hindu power of Vijayanagara further south, established eleven years earlier. Muhammad had little compensation in the subjugation of Gīrnār (Jūnāgarh), for its Rāja soon recovered his independence. On his way to Sind the Sultan was taken ill at Gondal.

Death of Muhammad : After partial recovery he proceeded to Thatta in Sind, in pursuit of Taghi who had taken refuge with the Sumrah chief. The imperial army had been considerably reinforced from Delhi, but the Sultan's illness grew worse every day, until at last he gave up his ghost on the banks of the Indus, on 20 March 1351, leaving his distracted empire in the lurch. As with Aurangzeb,

three centuries and a half later, the Deccan proved the ruin of Muhammad Tughlak. "Among the Amirs who crowded his camp, observes Dr. Ishwari Prasad, "he looked about for support to buttress up his tottering power, but they were all mediocrities without any plan or policy and could render him but little assistance. What seriously hampered him was the lack of capable governors and officers to carry into effect his plans. The inefficiency of the men on the spot emphasised the importance of the personal factor to such an extent that the Sultan's presence became necessary to restore order in the disturbed areas. The local administrations, paralysed by persistent opposition and mismanagement, could make no stand against the rebels whose power was daily increasing. Neither at Devagiri nor in Gujarat the local administration displayed any vigour to check the forces of disorder and the Sultan alone had to bear the brunt of the opposition. The imperial army, too, does not seem to have shown any remarkable efficiency ; probably the unusual severities of the Sultan had exhausted its patience and chilled its enthusiasm." (*Qaraunah Turks*, p. 247.)

A Tragedy of Dilettanteism :

Muhammad Tughlak ruled for twenty-six years from 1325 to 1351 A.D. It might be said with truth that during the first ten years the Sultan was busy creating discontent that could not be allayed in the remaining sixteen years. The history of the rebellions all over the Empire, from centre to periphery, that we have briefly sketched was more replete with disorders than could be indicated within our ambit. For example, the accession of the new Sultan was taken as the signal for revolt by his own nephew Bahā-ud-dīn Gashtasp in the Deccan (1326-7 A.D.). The rebel was pursued to his retreat in Kāmpli, whose Rāja fought both chivalrously and valiantly in defence of the refugee and sacrificed himself and his family in Rajput style committing *johār.* The Rāja's eleven sons were taken captive, converted to Islam and then raised to the rank of *amirs* and granted *mansabs.* The unfortunate nephew of the Sultan was himself taken before his uncle, reviled by the ladies in the *harem,* flayed to death, and his flesh cooked and served up to his family. It is strange to find such a Sultan being appreciated and exculpated, on the ground of such excesses being common to his age, by so careful a scholar as Dr. Ishwari Prasad. "Muhammad who was

one of the ablest men of the age," he writes, not in this context, though, "behaved with great tact." '*Thus shall those guilty of treason perish*' was Muhammad Tughlak's verdict; and disobedience to his erratic will was the very definition of treason for the Sultan. "My remedy for rebels," he declared, "is the sword. I employ punishment and use the sword, so that a cure may be effected by suffering. The more the people resist, the more I inflict chastisement." This was certainly not the attitude of "one of the ablest men of the age" who "behaved with great tact," especially as that pronouncement was made when the Sultan had realised, as he declared to Baranī: "My kingdom is diseased, and no treatment cures it. The physician cures the headache, and fever follows; he strives to allay the fever, and something else supervenes. So in my kingdom disorders have broken out; if I suppress them in one place, they appear in another; if I allay them in one district, another becomes disturbed."

It is difficult to challenge the description of the Sultan by the contemporary foreign observer, Ibn Battuta, who had neither an axe to grind nor a frown to fear:

'This king of all men,' wrote the Moor, 'is the one who most loves to dispense gifts and to shed blood. His gateway is never free from a beggar whom he has relieved and a corpse which he has slain. Tales are spread abroad among the people of his generosity and courage, as of his bloodshed and vindictiveness towards offenders. With all this he is the humblest of men and the most eager to show justice and truth. The rites of religion find full observance with him, and he is strict in the matter of prayer and in punishing its neglect. But what is pre-eminent in him is generosity...... when there was such a famine in India that a *maund* of corn cost six *dinars* [three guineas], he ordered six months' food to be distributed to all the inhabitants of Delhi from the crown stores. Each person, great or small, free or slave, was to have a pound and a half Morocco weight [about 2 lbs.] a day.'

This balanced estimate of the unbalanced Sultan is hard to beat. In spite of his wonted sense of justice and generosity a careful and unbiased examination of Muhammad's acts will confirm Ibn Battuta's observation that '*This king punished little faults like great crimes.*' It was the outcome of megalomania. Baranī tells us, he never talked over his plans with any of his councillors or friends. 'Whatever he conceived, he considered good, but in enforcing his schemes he lost territories, disgusted his people, and emptied his treasury. Embarrassment followed embarrassment, and confusion became worse

confounded. The ill-feeling of the people gave rise to outbreaks and revolts. The rules for enforcing the royal schemes grew daily more oppressive. The tribute of most of the distant countries and provinces was lost, and many of the soldiers and servants were scattered and left in remote lands. Deficiency appeared in the treasury. The mind of the Sultan lost its balance. In the extreme weakness and harshness of his temper he abandoned himself to severity. When he found that his orders did not work so well as he wished, he became yet more embittered against his people.'

When rebellions were rife in the country Muhammad turned for Pontifical recognition to the Caliph of Cairo (1341 A.D.) in order to increase his prestige in the eyes of the Muslims. *Firmāns* were received from the Caliph, from time to time, and the Sultan went to the extent of substituting the name of the Commander of the Faithful to that of his own in the *Khutbah* and some of his coins. "So fulsome was the Sultan's flattery of the Khalifah," writes Dr. Ishwari Prasad, "that his name was inscribed not merely on the coins, but in all important edifices of the state." It is indeed pitiable to find this "unquestionably the ablest man among the crowned heads of the middle ages" miss his mark so miserably as even Dr. Ishwari Prasad admits : "The Khalifah's patent was a poor substitute for sympathy and confidence. The Sultan persisted in his arbitrary course, and his vindictive attitude made it more and more difficult for him to win back the allegiance of his famine stricken subjects. The hope that a diploma from the Khalifah would make them cease to rebel against their ruler proved futile and towards the middle of 746 A.D. (A.H. ?) the Sultan was plunged into difficulties from which he could never extricate himself." (*Qaraunah Turks*, p. 183.)

After what has been stated so far it would be futile to discuss whether Muhammad's insensate cruelties were due to caprice or the just retribution of a sovereign inspired with the best of intentions but living in an age when Justice itself struck mercilessly only to be the more just. It is said that Muhammad, being far in advance of his age, permitted aggrieved persons to prefer suits even against himself in law courts ; but one of the instances cited to illustrate this claim is that of Sheikh Zadah Jami who, according to Yahya bin Ahmad, was confined in an iron cage and ultimately executed for daring to tell the Sultan to his face that he was a tyrant. To be truthful, Muhammad did indeed call upon the Sheikh to prove his

charge before the *Kāzi,* but it was left to the tribunal of history to pardon the outspoken critic of an unforgiving autocrat. Dr. Ishwari Prasad agrees : " the barbarous punishment inflicted by the Sultan on the Shaikh is in agreement with the tenor of his policy as reflected in the pages of Ibn Batūtah."

Equally futile is it to investigate whether Muhammad was really *mad* as he has too often been described. We do not need the testimony of even a single contemporary of the Sultan to confirm the impression that is unmistakably created by his erratic conduct. Whatever be the symptoms of madness according to pathologists, it is difficult to class Muhammad Tughlak among sane monarchs ; that he was not demented as a private individual cannot alter the verdict of history upon his political insanity. Lane-Poole finds in his stupendous failure " a tragedy of high intentions self defeated." That Muhammad's intentions were exalted cannot be denied. Just as he had improved his coinage, so did he truly desire to reform his state and his people. He is said to have abolished *sati* among the Hindus, built free hospitals, endowed schools, organised poor-relief, established state factories employing thousands of workers, patronised traders, and shown in a hundred different ways his solicitude for the welfare of his subjects. But these only constituted the silver lining that fringed the dark cloud that hung over the political sky of India during twenty-six long years under the name of Muhammad Tughlak. He was a dilettante like Humāyun, but lacking in the humanity of that equally ill-starred Mughal emperor ; Muhammad also had not Humāyun's chance to redeem the tragedy of his imperial dilettantism. The successors of the two afford a study in many contrasts.

The Criteria of Capricious Clio:

The Muse of History is a capricious dame; indeed, like the mollusc clio, she often allows herself to become mere 'whale's food.' That is how she has come to deify her omnivorous children, the Napoleons and Chingiz Khāns. These have supplied the criteria for historians too long. "When men call a king a kind man," the little Corsican is reported to have observed, "his reign has been a failure." Hence, to confine ourselves to the Tughlak dynasty, Muhammad must be lionised at the expense of Ghiyās-ud-dīn and Fīrūz. We have seen how the first of the Tughlaks did not allow either his humanity or his statesmanship to be swallowed by his martial vigour; yet his Empire endured during the period of his life time and even longer until it was

undermined by the wisdom of his too wise son. Fīrūz Tughlak lost not a tittle of his embarrassed and encumbered inheritance; he indeed redeemed more of it than could have been expected of a Koranolater like him. During a reign of over thirty-seven years (Muhammad ruled for 26), such dominion as had come to him was both free from the disorders of his predecessor's making and incomparably more prosperous from the prince to the peasants. If this pacified, enriched, and integrated legacy was squandered by his unworthy successors, the blame for it cannot be justly laid at the doors of Fīrūz. The poison introduced by Muhammad was too corrosive even against the statesmanlike antidotes of his successor, and found more sympathetic agents in the later Tughlaks.

Fīrūz was neither an Asoka nor an Akbar, both of whom have been noted for their religious toleration. Fīrūz was a fanatic like Aurangzeb, though unlike him a wine-bibber. But in spite of this he had more of constructive wisdom in him than his dilettante predecessor possessed. Lack of martial vigour, and the unwisdom of feudalising the kingdom are the only other charges that have been levelled against him. We shall examine how debit and credit equated under the new régime.

Accession of Fīrūz Tughlak:

When 'the (late) king was freed of his people, and they of their king,' to use Badāuni's expression, the capital was in the charge of the old minister Khwāja Jahān, and the army leaderless. Confusion prevailed in the camp, and, to prevent its repetition in the capital, Khwāja Jahān proclaimed a 'supposititious' son of Muhammad Tughlak king at Delhi. Fīrūz, son of Rajab (brother of Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughlak) through a Rajput wife, was very reluctant to assume the crown in spite of his formal nomination by his late cousin (for Muhammad had no son) and pressure from the army. At last matters reached such a pass that he had to yield as a matter of duty. Muhammad, always tender towards foreigners, had with him a large contingent of foreign Mughals. These attacked the rest of the army on their patron's death, and, but for Fīrūz making up his mind, the Sindhis and Mughals would have decided the fate of all. Fīrūz accepted the crown, defeated the enemy, and piloted the army, safely back to the capital.

Though confronted with a rival on the throne, difficulties soon resolved themselves. Khwāja Jahān, realising his error, submitted to his lawful master who pardoned him and directed him to go to the fief of

Samana. But the nobles taking the law into their own hands, like Bairām Khān in the case of Hemu, slew the old minister even against the inclinations of their sovereign.

Another incident which also throws light on the character of the new Sultan might be narrated here. Khudāwand-zāda, a sister of Muhammad, in spite of her reverential treatment by Fīrūz, plotted to take his life in favour of her own son Dāwar Malik. The design was betrayed to the Sultan, but she suffered no worse fate than a reduction of her pension and the banishment of her husband who was the prime instigator in the conspiracy.

To all outward seeming, therefore, Fīrūz looked like the much too lenient Jalāl-ud-dīn Khaljī. But if a parallel is at all to be found among the earlier Sultans of Delhi, Fīrūz resembled Nāsir-ud-dīn Muhammad more than any one else. Like Nāsir-ud-dīn he was too much inclined towards religion, and found his Balban in Khān-Jahān Mukbūl, an efficient minister. Both sovereigns were of a mild and forbearing disposition, but Fīrūz, as we shall presently see, was by far the more capable administrator.

One of the first benevolent acts of Fīrūz after his accession was, like the Athenian Solon, to cancel all accumulated debts and mortgages. Those who had monetary obligations towards the state, having been helped with loans, etc., during the troubled days of the great famine, were excused and called upon to pardon the dead Sultan for all the unjust acts of oppression they had suffered at his hands. Even the survivors of the dead victims were made to sign written pardons, with due witnesses, and the deeds buried in a chest placed near the tomb of Muhammad against the Day of Judgment. But the real atonement, though vicarious, for all Muhammad's sins was in the prosperity and peace that Fīrūz made possible, for a long suffering people, during his thirty-seven years' rule. The wisest act of Muhammad Tughlak was the nomination of his wiser and less sophisticated successor.

Military Campaigns:

Un-martial though he undoubtedly was Fīrūz vindicated his choice by undertaking military campaigns wherever duty called. He did not suffer from that itch for conquest which both Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī and Muhammad Tughlak had always felt. He rather followed the very wise policy that even the militant Balban had considered wholesome for his situation. To rule well a limited dominion, he

rightly judged, was, better than to scramble after an unruly vastness. The lessons of his fiery predecessor's experience were too fresh to be ignored.

Bengal : Even the ambitious Muhammad had been compelled to reconcile himself to the loss of Bengal. Fīrūz, therefore, might not have been expected to meddle with that province at all. However, in the very next year after his accession to the throne (1352 A.D.), he was provoked by the chauvinism of Shams-ud-dīn Ilyās Shāh who had made himself master of Eastern and Western Bengal and also attacked Tirhut with a view to annexation. Fīrūz, in spite of his disinclination for war, felt called upon to lead an expedition. He did this in a most noteworthy fashion, yet very characteristic of his entire nature. Marching with a very large army towards his retreating enemy, he issued a proclamation to the people of Bengal, which Dr. Ishwari Prasad has characterised as "one of the most extraordinary documents in the history of the Sultanate of Delhi, and throws much light upon the mild policy of Fīrūz." Though too long for full citation, the following excerpt cannot be missed :—

Calling upon all classes of people to loyally assist their overlord, the Sultan of Delhi, and promising them, in return, all sorts of concessions, the proclamation read: 'Whereas it has come to our auspicious ear that Ilyas Haji has been committing oppression and high-handedness upon the people of the territory of Lakhnauti and Tirhut, shedding unnecessary blood, even shedding the blood of women, although it is a well-established proposition in every creed and doctrine that no woman, even if she be a Kāfir, should be slain: And whereas the said Ilyas Haji has been levying illegal cesses not sanctioned by the law of Islam, and thus putting the people into trouble; there being no security of life and property, no safety for honour and chastity.........And whereas he has exceeded the limit, and publicly rebelled against our authority, therefore we have approached with an invincible army for the purpose of opening this territory, and for the happiness of the people thereof; desiring thereby to deliver all from this tyranny, to convert the wounds of his oppressions by the salves of justice and mercy, and that the tree of their existence, withered by the hot pestilential wind of tyranny and oppression, might flourish and fructify by the limpid water of our bounty.'

After this, having won a military triumph in the field of battle, and driven the enemy into the fort of Ikdala, the soft-hearted Sultan, true to the sentiments above expressed, shrank from the last act of seizure because of the shrieks of women pathetically wailing within the stronghold: 'To storm the fort, put more Musalmans to the sword, and expose honourable women to ignominy, would be a crime for which he could not answer on the Day of Judgment, and which

would leave no difference between him and the Mughals.' So he abandoned the province and returned to the capital (1354 A.D.).

However, a second interference was necessitated (1359 A.D.) by an appeal from Zafar Khān, son-in-law of Fakhr-ud-dīn, the first independent Muslim ruler of eastern Bengal. The imperial army consisting of 70,000 horse, nearly 500 elephants and a very considerable infantry, floated down the Ganges. On the way Fīrūz commemorated his late cousin by founding the great city of Jaunpur (Juna-pūr). As on the former occasion, the enemy was besieged in the fortress of Ikdala, and, finally, matters were pressed to a settlement by which Sikander, the successor of Shams-ud-dīn, agreed to part with Sonārgaon in favour of Zafar Khān. This was undoubtedly a triumph for Fīrūz, though his suppliant Zafar Khān preferred the ease of the imperial Court at Delhi to the arduous task of ruling at Sonārgaon, which he relinquished.

Orissa: Far from immediately returning to Delhi, Fīrūz pushed his way into Jājnagar (modern Orissa), fed his army on its rich produce, destroyed the temple of Jagannāth (Puri), the eastern replica of Somnāth, and like Mahmūd Ghazni, returned to his capital (1360 A.D.) receiving the submission of the Rāi of Jājnagar and a few other Hindu chieftains on his way.

Nagarkot: This had been conquered by Muhammad Tughlak during his Himalayan expedition in 1337 A.D. Its famous temple of Jwālāmukhi (Kāngra) had also been plundered by the Idol-breaker from Ghazni in (1008-9 A.D.). Fīrūz was drawn towards it on account of its Hindu Rāja's depredations into the surrounding country. The Sultan, who had started for the subjugation of Daulatābad, heard of the activities of the Rāja of Nagarkot and turned towards it in 1360-61 A.D. The fort was besieged for six months and then the Rāja having submitted was pardoned and reinstated. Fīrūz being attracted by some of the Sanskrit books which he found in the temple library got them translated into Persian.

Sind: In 1362–63 A.D. Fīrūz carried out his long deferred campaign against Thatta to avenge the wrongs suffered by the imperial army at the time of Muhammad's death. The expeditionary force consisted of 90,000 cavalry, besides elephants and numerous infantry. But on account of the provisions having run short, this vast army had to be diverted into Gujarat for a time. Here, through the treachery of guides, they were led into the Rann of Cutch and came to be very

nearly lost in the swamps. For six months nothing was heard of the imperial army, while famine devastated its numbers. But ultimately it debouched into the fertile plains of Gujarat. After replenishing his reduced forces and provisions, and dismissing the delinquent governor of Gujarat, Fīrūz returned to Sind. The deserters were caught hold of and pilloried instead of being executed; such of the soldiers as were inadequately equipped were given sumptuous allowances for refurnishing themselves. Reinforcements were ordered from Delhi, and, thanks to the efforts of the great Khān-Jahān Makbūl, they were rallied from all parts of the Empire: Badāun, Kanauj, Jaunpur, Bihar, Tirhut, Chānderi and Dhār, etc. The Sindhis were outnumbered and over-awed into submission, and the victorious Sultan returned to Delhi, taking Jām Babaniya with him, appointing his brother in his stead. The conquered Jām appears to have remained loyal to Fīrūz all his life. Dr. Ishwari Prasad, however, finds in this expedition, "a singular instance of the Sultan's fatuity and lack of strategical skill."

A Great Administrator:

Though Fīrūz Tughlak marred his statesmanship by his religious bigotry towards the Hindus as well as Muslim non-conformists, like Aurangzeb, he proved himself otherwise a great administrator. The days of religious toleration were a long way off, and Fīrūz, son of a Hindu mother though he was, could not be expected to be singular in this respect. All his predecessors had thought it their duty as 'true believers' to discriminate against the Hindus. Even Muhammad Tughlak, who has been considered to have been far ahead of his times in several respects, had converted the Sindhi rebels and the Princes of Kāmpli to Islam. Fīrūz, though he destroyed some temples, prohibited building new ones, and imposed *jizya* on the hitherto exempted Brāhmaṇs; he also reduced the last on appeal, from 10 *tankās* to 50 *jitals*, as well as got Sanskrit works translated into Persian. As against this common parochialism of the age, we have his record of secular administrative achievement, which certainly entitles him to the front rank among the Muslim rulers of medieval India. The public utilities that Fīrūz created were not a monopoly of the ruling class. As Dr. Ishwari Prasad admits, the welfare of the people was "the watchword of the new administration, and the Hindus and Muslims both were benefited by its activity."

Revenue System: 'When kingdoms are obviously ruined,' Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughlak thought, 'it is due to the oppressiveness of the

revenue system and the excessive royal demand; and ruin proceeds from destructive governors and officials.' But, as Moreland has observed, "the reign of Ghiyāsuddin was too short to establish a new tradition, and its main interest lies rather in the formulation of policy than in the results achieved." Ghiyāsuddin, he adds, "thus stands in the line of succession from Balban: his son was in a few years' time to furnish a striking example of the danger of departing from his policy." (*Agrarian System*, p. 45).

The unpractical theorist in Mahammad Tughlak revealed himself in his fiscal policy as well. The revival of the pernicious system of Farming and Assignment, which ultimately ruined the Empire, has been unfairly attributed to Fīrūz Tughlak. Alā-ud-dīn had abolished it and substituted cash payments as a sounder system. Under his immediate successors, owing to the spate of voluptuousness and anarchy that overtook the administration, there was a sudden lapse. Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughlak, though he tried to discourage Farming, had too short a time to restore fully Alā-ud-dīn's wise order. Muhammad was, certainly, not in favour of the anarchical system; but circumstances, for which he was himself partly responsible, soon forced his hands. The disorders in the Doab, in particular, made Muhammad think of fiscal re-organisation. Like Akbar and Joseph II of Austria after him, he contemplated a uniform and centralised system, for which he appointed a Royal Commission and spent about two crores of *tankās* in land-surveys, grants, etc. The aim was that 'not a span of land was to be left untilled,' and 'wheat was to replace barley, sugar-cane to replace wheat, vines and dates to replace sugar-cane'. The idea was perfect in conception like Muhammad's other plans, but the execution broke down. The fate of the River Country during a full quarter century is thus summed up by Moreland: "ruinous enhancement of revenue, loss of market, restriction of cultivation, rebellion, drastic punishment, attempts at restoration defeated by the failure of the rains, and, finally, a spectacular policy of reconstruction, ending in an almost complete fiasco." (Ibid, p. 48). Then, the political state of the country did not permit of any other system but that of Assignment and Farming of revenues. Baranī complains of Muhammad's patronage of men of low-caste, barbers, liquor-sellers, gardeners, weavers, etc., who were made equal to nobles, and received high appointments in Court and provinces. Aziz Khummār's is a case in point. Another speculative Farmer of revenue was the one appointed

at Bidar for a payment of one *crore* of *tankās*: "by occupation a corn-merchant, timorous, incompetent." A third 'contemptible, drug-soaked, little idiot' was given a Farm at Kara "without capital, adherents or resources of any kind," and "failed to collect even a tenth part of the sum he had promised to pay, and then gathering a rabble round him, went into rebellion, and assumed the title of king." Moreland concludes, "Farming and Assignment may thus be regarded as the most prominent agrarian institutions of the reign" (of Muhammad Tughlak).

If Fīrūz Shāh's revenue policy is to be properly understood, the antecedents above summarised cannot be ignored. Sultan Fīrūz, says the admiring chronicler, 'under divine inspiration,' spread all the revenues of his territories among his people. The various districts of the fiefs were also divided.' The system is best described in Afif's own words:—

> 'The soldiers of the army received grants of land [*jagirs*] enough to support them in comfort, and the irregulars received payment from the government treasury. Those soldiers who did not receive their pay in this manner were, according to their necessity, supplied with assignments upon the revenues. When these assignments of the soldier arrived in the fiefs, the holders used to get about half the total amount from the holders of the fiefs. It was the practice of certain persons in those days to buy up these assignments, which was an accommodation to both parties. They used to give one-third of the value for them in the city and receive one half in the districts. The purchasers of these assignments carried on a traffic in them, and gaining a good profit, many of them got rich and made their fortunes.'

Whatever its ultimate consequences, it was this avenue to Fortune that kept the provinces quiet during the long reign of Fīrūz. Peoples' energies were employed in peaceful and constructive occupations and 'By the blessing of God and favourable seasons, abundance of the necessaries of life prevailed, not only in the capital, but throughout his dominions...Grain was so cheap that in the city of Delhi wheat was 8 *jitals* a *maund* and grain and barley 4 *jitals*. A camp-follower could give his horse a feed of 10 *sīrs* [20 lbs.] of corn for one *jital*. Fabrics of all kinds were cheap, and silk goods, both white and coloured, were of moderate price. Orders were given for the reduction of the price of sweetmeats in accord with the general fall of prices.'

Though the dominions were circumscribed, the revenues were large; not because assessment was enhanced (it was actually reduced), but because of increased prosperity in all directions. The revenue was fixed after a careful examination of the condition of the

land. The titles of holders were scrutinised—*Quo Warranto?*—and fief-holders asked to establish their claims in courts of law in doubtful cases. Khwāja Hisām-ud-dīn Junaid, the assessor of revenue, toured through the kingdom and submitted a report, making suitable suggestions for reform. Abuses were put down and the State demands reduced. No less than twenty-three or twenty-six different taxes were abolished, either because they were vexatious or because they were not in conformity with the *Korān.* The State had hitherto appropriated four-fifths of the spoils of war, leaving only one-fifth to the soldiers, but Fīrūz restored the scriptural balance by the interchange of the State and soldiers' shares. The *khirāj, zakāt, khams,* and *jizya* were the only taxes sanctioned by the *Korān,* and Fīrūz would take no more. Even the irrigation cess was levied after due consultation with the *Ulema* who appear to have unanimously declared that 'the King was entitled to the right of *sharb.*'

In the words of the *Tarikh-i-Fīrūz Shāhi,* 'Sultan Fīrūz made the laws of the Prophet his guide, acting zealously upon the principles they laid down, and prohibiting all that was inconsistent therewith. No demand in excess of the regular government dues was to be made, and the officer who made any such exaction was to make full reparation. Brocades, silks and goods required for the royal etablishments were to be purchased at the market price, and the money paid......Such rules were made that the *rayats* grew rich and were satisfied...... Their homes were replete with grain, property, horses, and furniture; everyone had plenty of gold and silver; no woman was without her ornaments, and no house was wanting in excellent beds and couches. Wealth abounded and comforts were general. The whole realm of Delhi was blessed with the bounties of the Almighty.'

The revenues of the territories of Delhi, according to the same authority, were six *crores* and eighty-five *lacs* of *tankās*; and of the Doab eighty *lacs.* The royal gardens alone brought in 180,000 *tankās* a year, after deducting all the expenses. 'Sultan Fīrūz,' the chronicler tells us, 'had a great taste for the laying out of gardens which he took great pains to beautify.'

Public Works : The 'master-passion' of Fīrūz, however, was to build. He "indulged a passion for building," writes Sir Wolseley Haig, "which equalled, if it did not surpass, that of the Roman Emperor Augustus......the towns of Fīrūzābād or New Delhi, Fathābād, Hissār, Fīrūzpūr near Budaun, and Jaunpur were founded by him, and he is credited with the construction or restoration of four mosques, thirty palaces, two hundred caravanserais, five reservoirs, five hospitals, a hundred tombs, ten baths, ten monumental pillars, and a hundred bridges." This is by no means an exhaustive catalogue. To it might

be added the 150 wells he constructed for the use of travellers and the five canals he built for irrigation. The most important of these was 150 miles long, and conveyed the waters of the Jamuna into the arid tract in which he founded the city of Hisār-i-Fīrūza. His chief architect was Malik Ghāzī Shāhna, whose deputy was Abdul Hakk or Jāhir Sundhar. The plan of every building, with estimates, had to be submitted to the *Diwān-i-Wizārat* before money was sanctioned for its construction.

"Asiatic kings," says V. A. Smith, "as a rule, show no interest in buildings erected by their predecessors, which usually are allowed to decay uncared for. Fīroz Shāh was peculiar in devoting much attention to the repair and rebuilding of 'the structures of former kings and ancient nobles...giving the restoration of those buildings the priority over his own new constructions." Thus, the two inscribed Asoka pillars standing near Delhi were transplanted from Topra (in the Ambāla District) and Meerut. Afif, the contemporary chronicler, describes how this arduous task was accomplished: 'A number of large boats had been collected, some of which could carry 5,000 and 7,000 *maṇs* of grain, and the least of them 2,000 *maṇs*. The column was very ingeniously transferred to these boats, and was then conducted to Fīrūzābād, where it was landed and conveyed into Kushk with infinite labour and skill'.

All these herculean tasks required man-power, which Fīrūz specially recruited by organising a corps of slaves. We learn from the author above cited that

'the Sultan was very diligent in procuring slaves, and he carried his care so far as to command his great fief-holders and officers to capture slaves whenever they were at war, and to pick out and send the best for the service of the Court ......Those chiefs who brought many slaves received the highest favour......*About 12,000 slaves became artisans of various kinds.* Forty thosuand were every day in readiness to attend as guards in the Sultan's equipage or at the palace. Altogether, in the city and in the various fiefs, *there were 1,80,000 slaves, for whose maintenance and comfort the Sultan took especial care.* The institution took root in the very centre of the land, and the Sultan looked upon its due regulation as one of his incumbent duties.'

Slavery in no form is even a tolerable institution; but under medieval conditions, where a slave was technically a purchased or captured person, who was often manumitted and could rise to any position according to merit, it had not the odd flavour that we feel about it. To Fīrūz slavery was also the avenue of propagating Islam, for a slave became as a matter of course a convert. A separate

establishment with a *Diwān* and *Jāo-Shughūri* was maintained for the administration of the Slave Department. Thus the institution which had long existed was given by Fīrūz a local habitation and a name.

Abolition of Torture: The penal code of the age was a savage one. We have seen how savagely it was administered even under so enlightened a prince as Muhammad Tughlak undoubtedly was intellectually. But it was left to his less appreciated successor to mitigate its ferocity. V. A. Smith, who is by no means partial to Fīrūz Tughlak, writes : "One reform, the abolition of mutilation and torture, deserves unqualified commendation, and the orders must have been acted on to a considerable extent during his lifetime." Then he cites an extract from the autobiographical memoirs (*Fatūhāt*) of Fīrūz describing 'many varieties of torture,' such as, 'amputation of hands and feet, ears and nose; tearing out the eyes, pouring molten lead into the throat, crushing the bones of the hands and feet with mallets, burning the body with fire, driving iron nails into the hands, feet, and bosom, cutting the sinews, sawing men asunder; these and many similar tortures were practised.' But the Sultan proceeds, 'the great and merciful God made me, His servant, hope and seek for His mercy by devoting myself to prevent the unlawful killing of Musalmāns and the infliction of any kind of torture *upon them or upon any men.*'

We also learn that "If a traveller died on the road, the feudal chiefs and *muqaddams* calling together the Qazis and other Muslims examined the body of the deceased and drew up a report certifying under the seal of the Qazi that no wound was discernible on the body and then they buried it."

Religious Intolerance : It is a pity that such a Sultan should have besmirched his fair name by acts of religious intolerance such as he confesses to in his already cited memoirs. Not merely Hindus, but even Muslim dissenters did not escape his Inquisition: 'I seized them all and I convicted them of their errors. On the most zealous I inflicted capital punishment (*siyasat*), and the rest I visited with censure (*tāzir*), and threats of public punishment. Their books I burnt in public and, by the grace of God, the influence of this sect (*Shiāhs*) was entirely suppressed. Again about the Hindus: 'I forbade the infliction of any severe punishment on the Hindus in general, but I destroyed their idol temples and instead thereof raised mosques.' Indeed the days of Zain-ul'-Ābidīn and Akbar were far off.

Towards Muslims of the orthodox class, Fīrūz was paternal to a degree: "The Sultan's administration of poor relief," writes Dr. Ishwari Prasad, "deserves high praise. His solicitude for public welfare led him to issue instructions to the Kotwals to ascertain the number of the unemployed. These men were asked to apply to the Diwan, and occupation was provided for them according to their capacity. Those who could read and write were employed in the royal house-hold, and those who showed aptitude for some sort of practical work were attached to the royal establishments, while those who wished to become slaves of some noble or grandee were favoured with letters of recommendation. To enable poor Muslims to marry their daughters, the Sultan established a regular charity office (*Diwan-i-Khairat*), which considered each case on its merits, and then recommended for a grant of marriage allowance. The applicants of the first class were given fifty *tankās*, while those of the second and third were allowed thirty and twenty-five *tankās* respectively. A long-felt need was satisfied, and men came from far and wide to avail of the benefactions of the Sultan."

Death of Fīrūz: Withal, the Sultan, despite his royal weakness for wine, led a simple life like Aurangzeb's, and dined from earthen instead of gold or silver plates; gorgeous finery of all sorts was interdicted in his presence; and pictures were banned on banners or ensigns. A large share of the administrative achievement of Fīrūz belongs also to the very capable minister of his earlier years. This was Khān-Jahān Makbūl, a Hindu convert from Telingana. He had already made a mark under Muhammad Tughlak and had been rewarded with the fief of Multan. During the long absences of Fīrūz from the capital, Makbūl managed the affairs of the State, both civil and military, with remarkable devotion and efficiency, although he had 2,000 women of various nationalities in his seraglio to engross his pleasures. He died about 1372 A.D. when he was succeeded by his son who thereafter became Khān-i-Jahān. Meanwhile, Fīrūz too, was fast aging, and latterly became a tool in the hands of ambitious intriguers. Khān-i-jahān himself worked upon his mind, and like Malik Kāfur in the last days of Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī, poisoned the mind of the Sultan against his own son Muhammad. But the latter, by a bold strategy, conquered the affections of his father and got himself designated heir-apparent. Civil strife ensued between the partisans of the chief minister and the Crown Prince, and the aged Sultan was obliged to confer the insignia of royalty upon his grandson, Tughlak Shāh,

son of Fatah Khān. Not long after this final public act of his, Fīrūz died at the age of eighty, in October 1388, and the Empire was plunged in anarchy. "The death of Fīrūz," as Moreland observes, "marked the end of an epoch. In the course of a few years the kingdom broke up, and during the first half of the fifteenth century there was no longer a single predominant Muslim power in India." We shall see in the next chapter how chaos overtook the country again.

SOME RELEVANT DATES

A.D.	
1381	Peasants' Revolt in England; Watt Taylor murdered in the presence of Richard II.
1396	Gujarat independent.
1399	Jaunpur independent.
1401	Mālwa and Khāndesh independent.
1405	Death of Timūr.
1411-31	Ahmed Shah king of Gujarat; foundation of Ahmedābad city.
1414-50	Saiyids rule at Delhi.
1415	Huss burnt at the stake as a heretic in Europe.
1417-67	Zain-ul Ābidīn, fore-runner of Akbar, king of Kashmir.
1420	Nicolo Conti, Italian visitor, at Vijayanagara; first available record of European impressions.
1443	Abdur Razzāk, Persian envoy at Vijayanagara, finds the city the greatest in the world.

CHAPTER VII

CHAOS COME AGAIN

The period of 138 years intervening between the death of Fīrūz Tughlak (1388 A.D.) and the victory of Bābur over Ibrāhim Lodi at Pānipat (1526 A.D.) was one that witnessed a chaos of kingdoms such as we found in India between the death of Harsha (647 A.D.) and the overthrow of Prithvirāja Chauhān by Muhammad Ghūri on the field of Tarāori (1192 A.D.). Between the last mentioned date and the rebellion of Jalāl-ud-dīn Ahsan Shāh in Ma'bar, with which commenced the disruption of the Tughlak Empire (1335 A.D.), Delhi had become the mistress of the most extensive dominion seen in India since the days of Asoka. But this apogee of imperial power was reached only about 1311 A.D., when Malik Kāfur subdued Madura, and enjoyed during a brief quarter century up to 1335 A.D. During the next sixteen years of Muhammad Tughlak's reign (1335–51 A.D.) the Empire was reduced to Hindustan above the Vindhyas, excluding Bengal (since 1337 A.D.), with a precarious sovereignty over Gujarat and Daulatābad. Even the last named province was virtually lost in 1347 A.D. with the foundation of the Bahmani Kingdom by Hasan Kangu Bahman Shāh. Had Muhammad Tughlak survived longer, or had Fīrūz failed to 'convert the wounds of his oppressions by the salves of justice and mercy', the tree of their existence would have withered much earlier than 1388 A.D. Far from being responsible for the disruption of the Empire, Fīrūz deferred its death dance for thirty-seven years. Then came the inevitable deluge. The full-moon of Muslim Empire in India was reduced to a bare crescent round Delhi, within the next twenty-five years (1388–1412 A.D.). During the dark night of the new-moon (extinction of the Tughlak dynasty) the political sky of India was studded with innumerable stars and planets of varying magnitudes (the Hindu and Muslim kingdoms whose history we shall briefly sketch in this chapter).

I. KINGDOMS OF NORTH INDIA

Under the six Tughlak successors of Fīrūz,—Tughlak Shāh II (1388), Abū Bakr (1388-90), Muhammad II (1390-94), Sikander (1394), Mahmūd and Nasrat together (1394-98), and Mahmūd alone (1399-1412), North India found itself divided into as many kingdoms:

(1) Delhi, (2) Sind, (3) Gujarat, (4) Mālwa, (5) Jaunpur, and (6) Bengal. All of these were provinces of the Delhi Empire, but had now become independent. Besides these, there were also (*a*) the Muslim kingdom of Kashmir and (*b*) the Hindu principalities of Rajputāna; not to mention Nepal, Assam, and Orissa, which were too distant to play any important part in the political destinies of the country. None of the last named five had come under the sway of the Sultanate of Delhi, though all of them had been attacked and raided. We must run through the gamut to feel the discordant notes they produced, until India was once again brought to harmony by another Empire of the Crescent, viz. the Mughal.

(1) *Delhi*: Though Fīrūz was not the originator of the practice of granting fiefs, he reduced it to a regular system which bore anarchical results when he was dead. "The grants indeed amounted to vice-royalties of great power, and we find large districts and even provinces assigned to eminent nobles. Thus Karra and Dalmau were granted to Mardan Daulat with the title of 'King of the East'; Oudh and Sandila and Koil formed separate fiefs; Jaunpur and Zafarābad were given to another Amir; Gujarat to Sikandar Khan, and Bihar to Bir Afghan," etc. The last days of the pious Sultan, as we saw, were darkened by the conflicts between Khān-i-jahān and Prince Muhammad. The grandson, who was finally chosen to succeed, Tughlak II, proved a rake, and was killed by the *Amirs* and slaves "before he had lolled on the throne five months." Another grandson, Abu Bakr, succeeded, only to be superseded by his uncle Muhammad, the first choice of Fīrūz. Muhammad reigned four years (1390-94 A.D.), but vexed with a series of rebellions by Hindu chiefs as well as the great Muslim fief-holders. He vented his wrath against the vast army of slaves, a large number of whom were either put to death or otherwise persecuted and banished. But the disruptive forces continued uninterrupted. Muhammad's successor Humāyun, though he proudly styled himself Sikander Shāh, died within six weeks of his accession and made room for his brother Mahmūd. Mahmūd had a rival in his cousin, Nasrat Shāh, and the two set up independent Courts, one in Old Delhi and the other in Fīrūzābād, the new capital. Both were puppet princes, mere pawns and play-things in the hands of factious nobles.

Timūr's Invasion :

"Such was the chaotic state of the kingdom of Delhi when Timūr descended upon it with his ninety-two regiments of a thousand horse

each. The great conqueror whose career is familiar to all in the pages of Gibbon, had already overrun all Persia and Mesopotamia to the frontier of the Ottoman empire in Asia Minor on the west, and occupied Afghanistan on the east, before the wealth of India drew him to the invariable road of Central Asian invaders." Though his fiery followers were at first greatly hesitant, on account of the enervating climate of Hindustan, they were enthused by an appeal to their fanaticism. "My object in the invasion of Hindustan," said Timūr, "is to lead a campaign against the infidels, to convert them to the True Faith according to the command of the Prophet (on whom be the blessing of God!), to purify the land from the defilement of misbelief and polytheism, and overthrow the temples and idols, whereby we shall be *Ghāzis* and *Mujahids*, champions and soldiers of the Faith before God."

The familiar tale, or tragedy, has been oft recounted in all its pathetic details, of how Timūr, like the Assyrian, came down like a wolf on the fold, and devastated the Punjab up to Delhi, passing through Attock, Multan, Dipālpur, Bhatnir, Sirsuti, leaving anarchy, famine, and pestilence behind him.' He captured so many slaves *en route* that he did not know what to do with them.

'From the time of entering Hindustan up to the present,' Timūr records in his autobiography (*Malfusat-i-Timūri*), ' we had taken more than 100,000 infidels and Hindus prisoners, and they were all now in my camp......I asked my Amirs' advice, and they said that on the great day of battle these 100,000 prisoners could not be left with the baggage, and that *it would be entirely opposed to the rules of war to set them free.* In fact no other course remained but to make them all food for the sword......When this order reached the warriors of Islam, they drew their swords and put their prisoners to death.'

The invader had met with hardly any opposition until he came to the Jamuna. Here 'the soldiers of India fought bravely for their lives, but the frail insect,' writes the author of the *Zafarnāma*, 'cannot contend against the raging wind, nor the feeble deer against the fierce lion; so they were forced to flee.' (17th Dec. 1398.)

The same writer, Yazdi, records with a smack of savage relish, regarding the sack of Delhi, 'It was the divine pleasure to ruin the city and punish its people......Bold as the striving Hindus were, the officers in charge kept the gates shut and allowed no more troops to enter; but there were some 15,000 men already in, busy all that Friday night in pillaging, and burning the houses, and in the morning the soldiers outside broke in and added to the tumult. The whole place was sacked, and several palaces in Jahānpanah and Siri destroyed......Towers were built high with the heads of the Hindus and their bodies were left to beasts and birds of prey......Such inhabitants as escaped death were made prisoners. *Several thousand craftsmen were brought out and distributed by Timur among the princes and officers; the stone-masons*

were reserved to build for the conqueror a great mosque at his capital, Sāmarkand.'

After having the *Khutbah* read in his name at the capital, 'as an assurance of safety and protection,' Timūr marched to Meerut and Hardwār, and then left the country (March 1399), *via* Nagarkot and Jammu, dispatching thousands of infidels 'to the fires of hell' and seizing plunder 'which is as lawful to Muslims as their mothers' milk.'

For nearly seven years after this 'Scourge of God' had vanished beyond the Indian horizon (1399–1405 A.D.) the capital was in the hands of the *Vezir*, Ikbal Khān. Nasrat Shāh was driven out and Mahmūd set up a separate Court at Kanauj. But Ikbal was slain in battle by Khizr Khān, the viceroy of Multan, towards the close of 1405 A.D. This enabled Mahmūd Tughlak to return to his old capital, where he died in 1412 A.D. With him closed the dynasty of Ghiyās-ud-dīn, after ninety-six years' rule at Delhi.

Saiyids and Lodis:

For two years Delhi was without a royal master. Such Government as existed was conducted by the Afghan *Amir*, Daulat Khān Lodi, who did not assume the insignia of kingship. In 1414 A.D. Khizr Khān founded the new dynasty of the so-called Saiyids, i.e. descendants of the Prophet. Even he styled himself no more than the 'noble Tartar', Timūr's deputy, although, according to Thomas, he struck coins in the name of his predecessors. The history of Khizr Khān and his three successors (Mubārak, Muhammad and Ālam) covered a period of thirty-seven years (1414-51 A.D.). How small and powerless the Kingdom of Delhi had become by then, as Lane-Poole points out, will be realised from the fact that almost yearly campaigns were needed to extort the annual tribute from the Hindu Rāja of Katehar (Rohilkand) in the north-east of Delhi, from Mewāt in the south, and Etāwah in the Doab. There were frequent rebellions at Sirhind and Jalandhar, headed by Jasrath the Khokār chief of Murree, as well as at Koil (Aligarh), Badāun, Etāwah, Rupar (Simla) etc., fomented by the Timūrid governor at Kabul, and by the rulers of Mālwa and Jaunpur. The last of the line of Khizr Khān, Ālam or Alā-ud-dīn, retired to Badāun where he lived in peace for several years, yielding authority to Bahlol Khān Lodi, the first really *Pathān* King of Delhi (1451-88 A.D.). The Lodis ruled for the next seventy-five years down to Bābur's famous victory in 1526 A.D. They counted only three rulers,–Bahlol, Sikander, and Ibrāhim, but, although the insolence

of the last of them shattered the Kingdom, they were more successful than their predecessors, the Saiyids, in recovering the prestige if not the dominions of Delhi.

As stated before, Khizr Khān Saiyid had seized power by overthrowing Daulat Khān Lodi. Though Khizr Khān appears to have been a popular ruler, his worthless son Mubārak was done to death by one of his own ministers, Sarwar. The anarchy of the period is well described in the pages of the contemporary chronicle, *Tarikh-i-Mubārak Shāhi*, of Yahya bin Ahmad. Sarwar himself met a similar fate at the hands of his rivals when he was about to repeat his crime on his second master, Sultan Muhammad. Kamal-ul-mulk, the next minister, who is described as "a man well-versed in the duties of government," tried to rehabilitate the administration, but the forces of disruption proved too strong for him: Gwalior ceased to pay tribute; Ibrāhim Sharqi of Jaunpur seized several *Parganas* belonging to Delhi; Mahmūd Khaljī of Mālwa advanced towards the capital, though he had to withdraw on account of a threatened invasion from Ahmed Shāh of Gujarat into his own province. No wonder 'the business of the state,' as one of the chroniclers tells us, 'day by day fell into greater confusion, and affairs came to such a pass that there were *amirs*, at twenty *kos* from Delhi, who shook off their allegiance and began to prepare themselves for resistance.' It was under such circumstances that Bahlol Lodi, the ambitious Afghan governor of Lahore and Sirhind, seized power from Sultan Muhammad's weaker successor, Alā-ud-dīn Ālam Shāh, who, as stated already, not unwillingly retired to Badāun to live out a lotus-eater's life until his death in 1478 A.D.

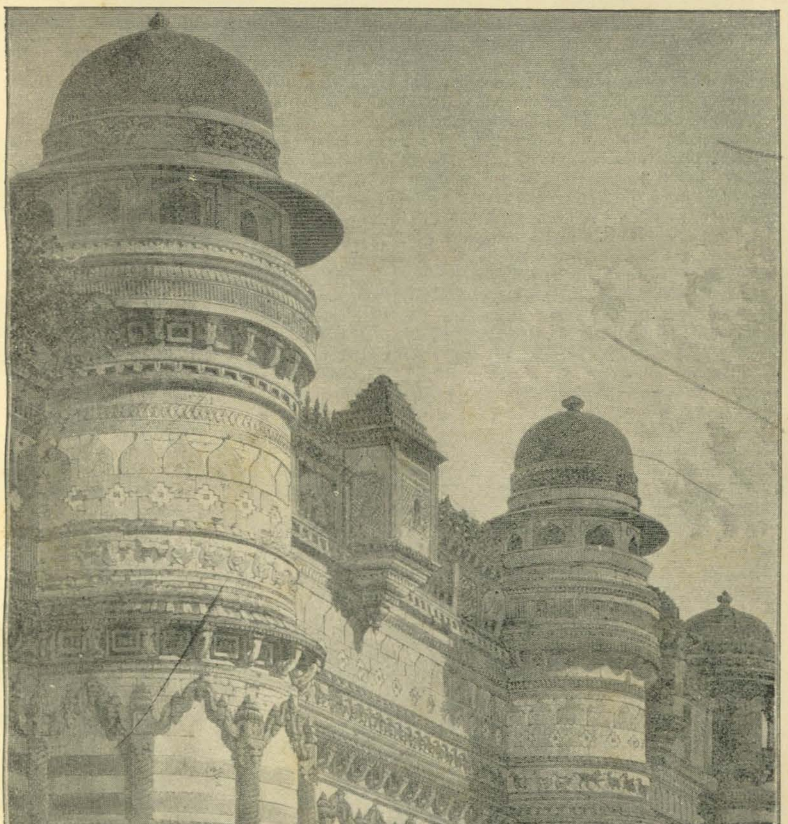
Lodi Achievements and Failures:

When Bahlol ascended the throne in 1451 A.D. the Delhi Empire had been already shorn of Bengal and Jaunpur in the east, and Sind, Gujarat, Mālwa and the Deccan in the south. All that was left to the Lodi Sultan was, therefore, the Punjab from Lahore to Dipālpur in the north, and Sirhind to Hānsi, Hisar, Pānipat and Delhi in the south. Beyond this, Ahmed Khān Mewāti held territory up to within fifteen miles of the capital; Sāmbhal to the very suburbs of Delhi was under Daryā Khān Lodi; the Doab was shared between several virtually independent Hindu and Muslim chiefs. But Bahlol acted with vigour, and before his death, in 1488 A.D., succeeded in subduing Mewar, Sind, most of the Doab, and the Sharqi kingdom of Jaunpur. He had the greatest trouble with the last named

province. Under its three successive rulers,—Mahmūd Shāh, Muhammad, and Husain Khān, frequent attempts were made by the Sharqis to overthrow Bahlol at Delhi, as they considered themselves better entitled to his dominion, since Mahmūd Shāh Sharqi was the late Sultan Alā-ud-dīn Ālam Shāh's son-in-law. Throughout Bahlol's long reign of thirty-seven years (1451-88 A.D.) war between Delhi and Jaunpur continued. Bahlol finally triumphed and placed his eldest son, Bārbak Shāh, as viceroy at Jaunpur, before his own death at Jalāli in in 1488 A.D. Bahlol's most predominant trait was his simplicity, assumed or real. The *Tarikh-i-Dāudi* records: 'In social meetings he never sat on the throne, and would not allow his nobles to stand; and even during public audiences he did not occupy the throne, but seated himself upon a carpet...He maintained a brotherly intercourse with all his chiefs and soldiers. If any one was ill, he would himself go and attend on him.' He was succeeded by his third son, Nizām Khān, under the title of Sikander Shāh.

The new Sultan was the son of a Hindu goldsmith woman, and, although he proved to be the greatest of the Lodi kings, like Fīrūz Tughlak (another prince born of a Hindu mother) he was a hater of the Hindus. The kingdom was extended by him so as to include Jaunpur and Bihar in the east, and Dholpur, Nagaur and Mālwa in the south. The Punjab was quieter than under his predecessor, and even the turbulent Afghan fief-holders, who had been conciliated by the shrewd Bahlol by behaving towards them as their *primus inter pares*, were adroitly governed. The history of the campaigns of Sikander need not detain us: Bārbak in Jaunpur, being unable to govern the unruly chieftains, was replaced by an imperial governor; after a skirmish with Alā-ud-dīn Husain Shāh of Bengal, peace was made by which Bihar was annexed to Delhi. Gwalior was attempted more than once, in the fashion of Aurangzeb in the Deccan, but it was not reduced until the next reign; its ruler Mān Singh proved too strong for Sikander.

Bigotry was Sultan Sikander Lodi's arch-weakness, as it was that of Fīrūz Tughlak and Aurangzeb. The desecration and destruction of Hindu temples (e.g. Mathura, Dholpur, Nagaur), whenever he could lay hands on them, was the routine in his campaigns. He prohibited the Hindus from bathing at the sacred *ghāts* on the Jamuna, and even banned barbers from shaving them. "A Brāhman of Bengal had aroused the indignation of orthodox Muslims by publicly maintaining that Islam and Hinduism were both true religions, and were but



Mān Singh's Castle : Gwalior

different roads by which God might be approached. The governor of Bihar was directed to send the offender to Court, where Sikandar asked the jurists whether it was permissible thus to preach. They decided that, since the Brāhman had admitted the truth of Islam, he should be invited to embrace it, with death as the alternative. The decision commended itself to Sikandar, and the penalty was exacted from the Brāhman, who refused to change his faith."

Last of the Great Sultans:

Apart from his fanaticism Sikander was a good and capable ruler. He was the first to make use of Agra as a sub-capital, and to place the administration of the trans-Gangetic province of Katehar (Rohilkand) on an entirely satisfactory footing. He centralised the administration to a considerable extent, and not merely kept in constant touch with his provincial governors, but even directly controlled the retainers of the fief-holders. His *firmāns* were frequently read out to the populace in all parts of his dominions, to keep up their sense of awe and majesty. We learn from the *Tarikh-i-Dāudi* that 'The Sultan daily received an account of the prices of all things and an account of what had happened in the different districts of the Empire. If he perceived the slightest appearance of anything wrong, he caused instant enquiries to be made about it.' Audit and inspection of accounts were very strictly carried out without respect to persons, and the interests of the poor and traders were always safeguarded; corn duties were abolished and agriculture was encouraged. "Every year the Sultan ordered a list of the poor and the indigent to be drawn up and gave them six months' provision according to their need. On certain days such as the *Id, Ashura,* and the anniversary of the Prophet's death prisoners were released unless they were convicted of embezzlement of public funds or misappropriation of other people's money. No one was arbitrarily deprived of his jagir, and an established custom was never abrogated." Indeed the last named quality was Sikander's most confirmed trait. As the author of the *Tarikh-i-Dāudi* puts it:

'Every business had its appointed time and a custom once fixed was never changed. When the Sultan had once allowed a particular meat or drink he never altered it. A man of note came from Jaunpur to visit him in the hot weather and was given six jars of *sherbet* with his food on account of the heat and thirst; but when he came again in winter he still had six jars of *sherbet* to drink. The Sultan always behaved to the nobles and great men in exactly the same way after many years as he did on the first day.'

A great earth-quake took place in this reign (6 July 1505). 'It was in fact so terrible,' writes the chronicler, 'that mountains were overturned, and lofty edifices dashed to the ground : the living thought the Day of Judgment was come ; and the dead, the Day of Resurrection.' Coming events did cast their shadows in advance in these terrible portents. They fulfilled themselves within ten years of Sikander Lodi's death in 1517 A.D. His successor, Ibrāhim, was to fall before the biggest political upheaval experienced since Muhammad Ghūri established Muslim dominion in this country. We shall revert to this in proper time. Meanwhile, we must rapidly sketch the history of the other provincial dynasties, from the fall of the Tughlaks to the rise of the Mughals, i.e. from 1388 to 1526 A.D.

(2) *Sind*: The story of Sind is soon told. We have already referred to its reconquest by Fīrūz Tughlak. Jām Babaniya lived at Delhi as a loyal courtier while his brother continued in charge of that province. The Sumrahs having reasserted their independence, as we have noted above, Bahlol Lodi subdued them once again. Multan had similarly been lost to Delhi during the anarchical period which followed the death of Fīrūz ; Baluchis called the Langāhs had established a new dynasty there (1451.A.D.). These were not subdued either under Sikander or under Ibrāhim. They were overthrown, like the Summas who had superseded the Sumrahs in Sind, by the Arghuns of Kandahar. When Bābur laid siege to the last named province, its ruler Shāh Beg Arghun sought refuge in Sind, where he succeeded in establishing himself (c. 1522 A.D.). The Mughals found Sind and Multan torn with dissensions between the Arghuns and the Langāhs and had no difficulty in annexing the two provinces to the Empire of Delhi.

(3) *Gujarat*: The rich province of Gujarat including Kathiawar, Baroda, and six Districts of the Bombay Presidency (Ahmedābad, Khaira, Panch Mahals, Broach, Surat and part of Thāṉa) had always been coveted by the Muslims, especially since its wealth was advertised by the famous loot of Somnāth by Mahmūd Ghazni in 1125 A.D. It was, however, not annexed to Delhi until 1297 A.D. under Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī, though raided several times earlier. Another century passed before the province became an independent Muslim kingdom. Zafar Khān, who was governor since 1391 A.D., shook off his allegiance to the Sultan of Delhi in 1401 A.D. and created his son Tātār Khān Sultan of Gujarat under the title of Nāsir-ud-dīn Muhammad Shāh. Like the kingdoms of medieval Hindu India, whose history we surveyed in the first chapter, the annals of Gujarat under its new

Muslim dynasty are full of wars with all its neighbouring states. We have space only for a few outstanding features and personalities.

Nāsir-ud-dīn imprisoned his father, but the latter got his son poisoned and ascended the throne as Sultan Muzāffar Shāh, only to be also poisoned in turn by his grandson Ahmed Shāh who ruled from 1411 to 1441 A.D. He was followed eighteen years later (1459 A.D. by the greatest ruler of the dynasty, Mahmūd Bégarha, who reigned till 1511 A.D. His successors were Muzāffar II and Bahādur Shāh, about whom more later. The only incident we need refer to in the relations between Gujarat and the rulers of Delhi, after Fīrūz Tughlak's entree into the province during his campaign against Thatta (1362-3 A.D.), is the flight of Sultan Mahmūd Tughlak who sought refuge in vain with his governor of Gujarat, during Timūr's invasion (1399 A.D.). Mahmūd had consequently to turn to Mālwa for much needed shelter.

Muzāffar Shāh of Gujarat, who had himself ascended the throne by poisoning his own son, waged war on Hushāng Shāh of Mālwa for a similar crime against his father Dilāwar Khān Ghūri (1406 A.D.). Hushāng was deprived of his throne and taken prisoner, but later reinstated at Dhār. Provoked once again by the ungrateful Hushāng, Ahmed Shāh, Muzāffar's successor in Gujarat, invaded Mālwa and inflicted a great defeat on him. The new Sultan of Gujarat was a great warrior as well as administrator. "Throughout his reign he never suffered a defeat, and his armies invariably prevailed over those of the Sultanate of Mālwā, the chiefs of Asīrgarh (Khāndesh), Rajputāna and other neighbouring countries." Like his friend Sultan Fīrūz Bahmani he was also a zealous enemy of the Hindus whose temples he destroyed. He built the noble city of Ahmedābad about which a contemporary historian wrote : 'Travellers are agreed that they have found no city in the whole earth so beautiful, charming, and splendid.'

But, as stated before, Sultan Mahmūd Bégarha who came to the throne at the age of thirteen and ruled for fifty-two years (1459-1511 A.D.) was by far the most eminent ruler of this dynasty. He is said to have dispensed with a Protector or Regent from the very beginning. Remarkable tales about his personal peculiarities, such as consuming a *maund* of food daily, and his body being so saturated with poison that flies settling on it would drop down dead, etc., were made current by the Italian traveller Ludovico di Varthema.

The prince of Cambay's daily food
Is ass, and basilisk, and toad.

He made himself master of the two strong fortresses (hence *Bé-garha*) of Champaner and Junāgarh, overran Cutch, and gained victories over Ahmednagar, etc. His reign was also memorable for the first conflicts between the Cross and the Crescent in India. He joined the Ottoman Sultan of Turkey in trying to expel the Portuguese from the Indian waters. Since Vasco da Gama discovered the Malabar coast in 1498 A.D. Portuguese pirates had always menaced Indian shipping. A great naval engagement was fought with them, near the island of Diu, off the Kathiawar coast, in 1508 A.D., by the combined fleets of Gujarat and Turkey. The Christians were defeated for the first time in Indian history. De Almeida's son was killed in the fight which lasted two days. His ship was surrounded on every side. His leg was broken by a cannon-ball at the commencement of the action; nevertheless he had himself placed on a chair at the foot of the mainmast, and gave his orders as coolly as ever. Shortly afterwards another cannon-ball struck him in the breast, and the young hero, who was not yet twenty-one, expired, in the words of Camoens, without knowing what the word surrender meant." Next year his death was avenged by his father (2nd February 1509) and a year later Mahmūd surrendered Diu to Albuquerque the conqueror of Goa. A Portuguese factory, symbol of a new power, appeared in the island in 1513 A.D.

Nevertheless Mahmūd Bégarha, in the words of the Muslim chronicler,

'Added glory and lustre to the kingdom of Gujarat, and was the best of Gujarat kings, including all who preceded and all who succeeded him; and whether for abounding justice and generosity, for success in religious war, and for the diffusion of the laws of Islam and of Musalmans; for soundness of judgment, alike in boyhood, in manhood, and in old age; for power, for valour, and victory he was a pattern of excellence.'

(4) *Mālwa:* The history of Mālwa is closely interwoven with that of Gujarat, Khāndesh, Mewar and the Deccan, with all of whom, by its very situation, it was involved. It was successively ruled by two Muslim dynasties: the Ghūri since 1401 A.D., and the Khaljī from 1436 A.D. to its absorption within Gujarat in 1531 A.D. Its capital was the ancient Hindu city of Dhār until Hushāng the parricide, mentioned already, shifted it to Māndu where he erected several magnificent edifices. The fortified city, built on a commanding eminence, with its nearly 25 miles of protective wall, though in ruins, is still noted for its splendid Jāmi Masjid, the Hindola Mahāl, the Jahāz Mahāl, the tomb of Hushāng himself, and the palaces of the

romantic Baz Bahādur and Rūpmati, and other remarkable edifices of sandstone and marble. Hushāng's worthless son, Mahmūd, was the third and last of the Ghūri dynasty of Mālwa. Being poisoned in 1436 A.D. the throne was seized by Mahmūd Khān Khaljī, who ruled for thirty-three years (1436-69 A.D.) most of which he spent fighting against internal and external enemies and rivals. 'Scarcely a year passed that he did not take the field, so that his tent became his home, and his resting place the field of battle.' But we also learn that Sultan Mahmūd was polite, brave, just, and learned; and during his reign his subjects, Muhammadans as well as Hindus, were happy and maintained a friendly intercourse with each other...His leisure hours were devoted to hearing the histories and memoirs of courts of different kings of the earth read.'

Two of Mahmūds various ventures are worthy of record: (1) In 1440 A.D. his ambition led him to march towards Delhi with a view to proclaim himself king in place of the usurper Bahlol Lodi; but the advance of the latter to meet him, as well as troubles nearer home, promptly brought him back to Mālwa. (2) Owing to Rāṇa Kumbha of Mewar's support to the Ghūris, whom Mahmūd had overthrown in Mālwa, and the Rāṇa's relations with the Rajput chiefs within the borders of his dominions, he had a tough fight with Kumbha. In 1455 A.D. he recovered Ajmer from the Rāṇa, captured Bundi, and extorted heavy indemnity from the Rajputs. To commemorate his successes he erected a great Tower of Victory at Māndu such as Rāṇa Kumbha had already raised at Chitor. The latter has remained, but of the former no trace is found. Mahmūd succeeded in considerably enlarging his kingdom, though he failed to conquer Delhi, Gujarat, Chitor and the Deccan, all of which he had attempted to take.

The history of his successors is worth no more than a bare summary. The next ruler, Mahmūd's ease-loving son Ghiyās-ud-dīn, was content to loll in his *harem* with 15,000 women, until he was poisoned by one of his sons, who ascended the throne as Sultan Nāsir-ud-dīn (1500 A.D.). The new Sultan was as tyrannical as he had been unscrupulous and was deservedly challenged by a rebellious son, supported by a large number of his oppressed subjects Nāsir-ud-dīn died in the midst of this turmoil in 1511 A.D. (the year in which his greater contemporary Mahmūd Bégarha also died). Under his successor, Mahmūd II, Mālwa rapidly declined. His first minister, who was a Hindu, was murdered by his Muslim nobles;

his second, Muhāfiz Khān, governor of Māndu, proved a tyrannical dictator. Rebellions broke out everywhere, and soon Mālwa had three Sultans challenging each other's claims: Mahmūd II at Ujjain Muhammad II at Māndu, and Hushāng II at Sihor. Ultimately, Mahmūd II succeeded in ousting the other two, though at the cost of having to submit to the dictatorship of his Rajput supporters under the leadership of Medini Rāi of Chānderi. He made one desperate effort to extricate himself, with the help of Muzāffar II of Gujarat, but this only brought on him the greater might of Rāṇa Sangrāma Simha, Medini Rāi's patron. Finally, outliving his great Rajput rivals, Mahmūd fell before Bahādur Shāh of Gujarat in 1531 A.D. When the latter challenged him, so runs the ignominious tale, Mahmūd retired into his seraglio deciding to end his days in pleasure. Bahādur captured Māndu, annexed Mālwa, and sent Mahmūd and his sons to Champaner; but before reaching that place, being attacked by some tribes from the hills, fearing a rescue, they were put to death by their escort.

(5) *Jaunpur*: The foundation of the city of Jaunpur by Fīrūz Tughlak, during his second Bengal campaign (1359-60 A.D.), has already been referred to. This new city on the Gumti, opposite Zafarābad, was destined to rise rapidly to a pre-eminence eclipsing even Delhi for a short time. It owed its greatness to two of its rulers, Khwāja Jahān and Ibrāhim Shāh. The former, a eunuch, Sarvar by name, was originally governor of the provinces to the east of Delhi under the later Tughlaks (1394 A.D.). He managed his charge most efficiently and gained from Mahmūd Tughlak the title of Lord of the East (*Malik-ūs-Sharq*). After the shock of Timūr's invasion, Khwāja Jahān's adopted son, a descendant of a slave of Fīrūz Tughlak, assumed the title of Mubārak Shāh Sharqi in 1399 A.D. His successor, Ibrāhim, was the greatest King of the Sharqi dynasty and ruled for thirty-five years (1402-36 A.D.). During his reign Delhi was all but completely eclipsed by Jaunpur which earned for itself the title of *Shirāz-i-Hind*. After him three inconsequential successors followed,—Mahmūd, Muhammad and Husain, under the last of whom the struggle with Delhi ended with the annexation of Jaunpur in 1476 A.D. by Bahlol Lodi. The sequel to this has already been told. Bahlol left Jaunpur in the charge of his eldest son Bārbak. Sikander continued his brother in the same office until he was found too incompetent to manage it. This experiment of appointing a brother in rival charge at Jaunpur was for the

second and last time repeated in the case of Jalāl Khān by the nobles, soon after Ibrāhim's accession. It ended in Prince Jalāl's revolt, fratricidal war, and finally execution of the last independent ruler of Jaunpur by the last Sultan of Delhi before Bābur.

Under its virtual founder, Khwāja Jahān, the Sharqi Kingdom extended from Kanauj in the west to Bihar in the east, comprising the fiefs of Kanauj, Kara, Oudh, Sandila, Dalamau, Bahraich, Bihar and Tirhut. During the period of its ascendancy Jaunpur carried on wars with Delhi, Bengal, Orissa and Mālwa. Though it did not succeed in annexation in any of these directions, two important successes were gained in converting the Hindu Rājas of Jājnagar and Gwalior into tributaries. Kālpi at one time was disputed by Delhi, Jaunpur, and Mālwa, but was finally annexed by the last named power (1435 A.D.). Even as Ibrāhim was the greatest ruler of Jaunpur, Husain was the most perplexing and disappointing. "He was a man of ideas, with wide opportunities and commensurate resources, ever on the point of realising some great scheme of aggrandisement, and ever missing his opportunity through carelessness folly, and perhaps physical cowardice."

The greatest and most enduring achievement of 'the Kings of the East' was architecture. In this respect, according to Lane-Poole, the Sharqis "stand supreme in the period before the Moghul empire." Though much was destroyed by Bahlol Lodi, the beautiful Atala Devi Mosque and a few others still survive to bear witness to the splendour that was Jaunpur. The great mosque built in 1408 was Ibrāhim Sharqi's most splendid monument, and is thus described by Lane-Poole :—

> "Its characteristic feature, a lofty inner gateway of simple grandeur, recalling the propylon of Egyptian temples, supplied the place of a minaret, and concealed from the quadrangle the too dominating outline of the great dome which covered the house of prayer. The graceful two-storeyed colonnades, five aisles deep, round the spacious quadrangle, broken by minor domes and gateways, the fine ashlar masonry of its plain buttressed exterior, the exquisite and rich, yet never intricate, floral ornament surrounding its doors and windows and prayer-niche, its geometrical trellis-screens and panelled ceilings, are typical of a pure style of Saracenic art, with scarcely a trace of Indian influence. Even in such a land of precious stones of architecture, the Atala Masjid remains a gem of the first water."

(6) *Bengal* : Since the flight of Lakshmaṇa Sena before Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn, in 1205 A.D., Bengal was always ruled by the Muslims. After Tughril's revolt, in 1282 A.D., we noted how Balban's son, Bhugra Khān, founded a dynasty in that province, which ruled in

virtual independence of Delhi. About 1297 A.D. Eastern and Western Bengal came to be separated into two kingdoms, with Sonārgaon and Lakhnauti as their capitals. These were not united until 1352 A.D., under Ilyās Khān who had become ruler in 1340 A.D. Sikander Shāh of this family raised several stately buildings in their new capital of Pandua (1358-89 A.D.). This dynasty was, during a short interlude, superseded by a Hindu prince, Rāja Ganesh (Kans), and his son and grandson who became converts to Islam (1414 A.D.). Then followed an Abyssinian dynasty which reigned till 1493 A.D. when it was overthrown by Husain Shāh, a reputed Arab Saiyid.

Husain Shāh was a popular king and reigned over Bengal from 1493 to 1518 A.D. "His name," writes V. A. Smith, "is still familiar throughout Bengal; and no insurrection or rebellion occurred during his reign of twenty-four years. He died at Gaur (Lakhnauti), having 'enjoyed a peaceable and happy reign, beloved by his subjects, and respected by his neighbours'." The story of his successor, Nusrat Shāh will be told in a later chapter. We learn from the chronicles that he was 'a prince of gentle disposition and strong natural affections, for he not only refrained from slaying, mutilating, or imprisoning his brothers, but doubled the provision which his father had made for them.'

It will be recollected that Lakhnauti was known in Delhi as Balghākpur or 'the City of rebellion', and Bengal as 'hell crammed with good things. Though conquered, the province had never been assimilated to the Delhi Empire. After Balban, Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī had never troubled himself about Bengal. Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughlak, indeed, restored the suzerainty of Delhi for a time, but Muhammad lost it, and Fīrūz despite his two campaigns never regained it. "Bengal, whether as a province of Delhi or as an independent Kingdom," observes Sir Wolseley Haig, "was not a homogeneous Muslim State. Great Hindu land-holders held estates which were, in fact, principalities, and their allegiance to a Muslim ruler, like his to a Sultan of Delhi, depended on the ruler's personality....The general attitude of the rulers of Bengal to their Hindu subjects was tolerant, but it is evident, from the numerical superiority in eastern Bengal of Muslims who are certainly not the descendants of dominant invaders, that from time to time waves of proselytism swept over the country."

Yet, as Smith has pointed out, "Some of the Muhammadan kings were not indifferent to the merits of Hindu literature. A Bengālī

version of the *Mahābhārata* was prepared to the order of Nusrat Shāh, who thus anticipated the similar action of Akbar. An earlier version of the same poem is believed to date from the fourteenth century, and another was composed in the time of Husain Shāh, by command of his general, Parāgal Khān. 'Frequent references are found in old Bengālī literature indicating the esteem and trust in which the Emperor Husen Sāhā was held by the Hindus.' In fact, it seems to be true that 'the patronage and favour of the Muhammadan emperors and chiefs gave the first start towards the recognition of Bengālī in the courts of the Hindu Rājās' who, under the guidance of their Brāhman teachers, were more inclined to encourage Sanskrit."

(7) *Kashmir*: Kashmir, at the other corner of North India, was safely perched on the western Himālayas and enjoyed for long immunity from Muslim conquest. As we noted in chapter one, in spite of the earlier advance of the Crescent into Hindustan, Kashmir continued to be under its Hindu rulers until 1339 A.D. In that year the first Muslim dynasty was established by Shāh Mir who assumed the title of Shams-ud-dīn. Earlier, the kingdom had been raided by Mahmūd Ghazni (1015 A.D.), as later by Timūr (1399 A.D.), but Kashmir was not annexed to the Delhi Empire until the days of Akbar (1586 A.D.). Sikander, the fifth successor after Shams-ud-dīn, (1386-1410 A.D.) was the most bigoted ruler of the dynasty, and is remembered as the Idol-breaker of Kashmir. "He freely used the sword to propagate Islam and succeeded in forcing the bulk of the population to conform outwardly to the Muslim religion." The greatest ruler of the family was Zain-ul-'Ābidīn (1417-67 A.D.). He was Akbar's forerunner in religious toleration and confined himself with strict fidelity to one wife, a rare phenomenon among Muslim rulers of that age. He prectised universal toleration, repealed the *jizyā*, allowed the Brāhmaṇs exiled by Sikander to return to their homes, permitted the building of Hindu temples, and prohibited the slaughter of kine. He himself abstained from eating flesh. "He encouraged literature, painting, and music, and caused many translations to be made of works composed in Sanskrit, Arabic, and other languages."

II. Kingdoms of South India

We have described above, however cursorily, the history of the seven Muslim kingdoms of North India, from the fall of the Tughlak Empire to the rise of the Mughal Empire. The only region of importance left out of our survey is Rajputāna. This is better taken

up logically with the other great Hindu Empire of Vijayanagara, as together illustrating the resistance of Hindu India to the advance of Muslim dominion. Here we shall consider the fortunes of the three Muslim kingdoms of India to the south of the Vindhyas, viz., (1) Khāndesh, (2) Bahmani and its off-shoots, and (3) Madura.

(1) *Khāndesh*: The little kingdom of Khāndesh, lying between the Vindhyas in the north, the Deccan plateau in the south, Gujarat in the west, and Berar in the east, has often been overlooked by students of history. But it deserves some special notice because, situated though it was between bigger and constantly warring kingdoms, it enjoyed 'a quiet prosperity' under its Fārūki kings. Conquered evidently under Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī, it was in the charge of a Muslim governor, until it became independent after the death of Fīrūz Tughlak (1388 A.D.). Its first sovereign ruler was Malik Rāja Fārūkī who, like his northern neighbour Dilāwar Khān of Mālwa, declared himself independent when he realised that Delhi was too impotent to reach him. Though very ambitious, he was a man of peaceful habits and tolerated the Hindus, as well as strove to make his subjects happy by encouraging agriculture and industries. He was followed, after his death in 1399 A.D., by his son Malik Nāsir who is remembered for his capture of the famous fortress of Asīrgarh from its Hindu chieftain Āsā Ahir. Akbar conquered this stronghold guarding the entrance into the Deccan in 1600 A.D. Nāsir's grandson, Mubārak, was a warlike prince who extended his rule over a part of Gondwana and carried his arms further afield into Chota Nāgpur. The later rulers of Khāndesh were none worthy of notice in a brief sketch like this. Always dependent upon Gujarat, with whom they had cultivated family relations, the Fārūkis ultimately dwindled into insignificance. The province, indeed, became famous on account of the fortress of Asīrgarh and the gold filigrees of Burhānpur. Its material prosperity increased under rulers like Adil Khān (1457-1503 A.D.). As Mr. Rushbrook-Williams has observed, Khāndesh affords a good example of the manner in which the amenities of life may flourish under conditions which prohibit the exercise of the art of politics. Mirān Muhammad Fārūki was ruler when Bābur invaded India.

(2) *Bahmani*: The history of this famous kingdom of the Deccan, from its foundation to its disintegration, covers about 180 years (1347-1526 A.D.). During this period, fourteen princes ruled over the territory extending from the Pen Ganga in the north, to the

Krishna in the south, and from Konkan in the west to Bhongīr (in the Nizāms Dominions) in the east. Wars were waged with all the adjoining kingdoms, like Gujarat, Mālwa, Telingana, or even Orissa, but most of all with Vijayanagara in the south. It is futile to recount all the stereotyped details of a typical Muslim kingdom with its raids, conquests, tyrannies, persecutions, domestic tragedies, occasionally relieved by administrative achievements, fostering of art and architecture, ultimately smothering effort and ambition and everything manly in effeminate luxury. We should therefore be content with a few illustrative facts characterising the annals of the Bahmani kings.

The legend, recorded by Ferishta, about the origin of the name Bahmani may be dismissed at once. Every school-boy knows the story of Hasan Gangu and his Brāhmaṇ master, out of gratitude for whom, the dynasty is alleged to have been christened Bahmani (Brāhmaṇi). The *Burhān-i-Ma'āsir* clearly states that 'in consequence of his descent the King was known as Bahman'; and the coins and inscriptions lend no support to the popular tale. Hasan, as Smith points out, "was a fierce, bigoted Muslim who would not have dubbed himself a Brāhman for any consideration." The circumstances of the establishment of the Bahmani kingdom by Hasan Kangu, in 1347 A.D., have already been described. During the anarchy that prevailed under Muhammad Tughlak, the Afghan *amirs* of the Deccan raised one Ismail Makh to the throne at Daulatābad. He voluntarily yielded sovereignty to the more capable Hasan, who assumed the title of Alā-ud-dīn Bahman Shāh, and ruled for over ten years from 1347-58 A.D., with his capital at Kalburgi or Gulbarga. For convenience of administration he divided his kingdom into four *tarafs* or provinces, but himself toured through them to maintain unity. His successor, Muhammad Shāh I (1358-73 A.D.), was more a warrior of Islam than a capable administrator. While the internal government was carried on by his father's minister (who is said to have continued until the accession of the sixth ruler, thus living for over a hundred years), Muhammad devoted himself to the cultivation of arms. His reign was marked by that series of wars, with Telingana and Vijayanagara, which out-lasted the Bahmani kingdom and endured as a legacy under its successors. The bone of contention between Vijayanagara and Bahmani was the rich Rāichūr Doab, for the possession of which, the two powers fought like France and Germany over the Rhineland. Muhammad succeeded in filching Golkonda from the Hindu ruler of Wārangal, as well as turning the

tables against Bukkarāya I of Vijayanagara for the time being. We learn from Ferishta that Muhammad Shāh, during his reign of fifteen years, killed 500,000 Hindus.

The next ruler, Mujāhid Shāh, was murdered by his uncle, within five years of his accession (1377 A.D.), and was followed in less than a year by Muhammad Shāh II, the youngest brother of his namesake. He acquired, by his fondness for poetry and philosophy, the name of the Second Aristotle, and died in 1397 A.D. The same year saw the accession and dethornement of two of his sons, Ghiyās-ud-dīn and Shams-ud-dīn, both of whom were blinded and imprisoned in succession.

Fīrūz Shāh, the eighth ruler of the dynasty, reigned from 1397-1422 A.D. In the estimation of Ferishta, the house of Bahman Shāh attained its greatest splendour in the days of this king. Despite a devastating famine, which raged for over a decade in the Deccan, the usual wars against Wārangal and Vijayanagara were carried on, resulting in the acquisition of the fort of Pāngal, and extension of the Bahmani conquests as far as Rājamahendri in the Godāvarī delta, on the one hand, and the killing of Prince Bukka and extortion of an indemnity of £400,000 from his father Harihara II, on the other. For the rest, Fīrūz Shāh Bahmani indulged his taste for building noble edifices, like those at Fīrūzābād on the Bhīma and Gulbarga, and his eclecticism of the *harem* which contained the choicest daughters of Eve from all countries. One of his wars with Vijayanagara is known as the War of the Goldsmith's Daughter. The Rāya of Vijayanagara having been bewitched by a goldsmith's girl at Mūdgal, in the Bahmani territory, raided the place to capture the coveted quarry. Fīrūz chivalrously retaliated by defeating the Rāya and forcing him to part with one of his own daughters, as well as by securing the goldsmith's girl for his son Hasan Khān.

Hasan Khān, however, had to be content with being the son-in-law of a goldsmith, for the throne was secured by his uncle Ahmad Khān, who ruled for thirteen years (1422-35 A.D.). His reign was marked by further victories over Vijayanagara and Wārangal. The territories of the former were harried and devastated, while those of the latter were conquered and annexed. The Hindu ruler of Wārangal was killed, and the kingdom was absorbed (1425 A.D.). There were also inconsequential wars in the Konkan, Gujarat, Mālwa, etc. Ahmad's campaigns were noted for the celebration of the slaughter of every 20,000 prisoners he captured during his marches,

men, women, and children, notwithstanding a compact made by Muhammad I with Vijayanagara to spare the non-combatants. Ahmad's greatest innovation was the change of his capital from Gulbarga to the more salubrious and strategical Bidar, 60 miles to the north-east.

Ahmad's son and successor, Alā-ud-dīn II, ruled for 22 years (1435-57 A.D.). He was much troubled by domestic strife, including the disloyalty of his own wife, Malika Jahān, and his brother, Muhammad Khān. He tried to defend himself by calling to his aid a body of foreigners, who merely plunged the kingdom in greater feuds. On one occasion the Deccani *amirs* invited their alien rivals to a feast, but only entertained them with the sword of tyranny, and the *sherbet* of destruction, so that about 1,200 Saiyids of pure lineage and nearly 1000 other foreigners from seven to seventeen years of age were put to the sword.' But Ferishta tells us,

> 'To every part of his dominions he [Alā-ud-dīn] sent censors of morals and just judges; and though he drank wine himself, he forbade it to others, as also gaming. He put chains on the necks of idle vagabonds and made them street scavengers and labourers, that they might reform and earn their livelihood, or else quit the country. If any one, of any rank, after warning and much correction, was convicted of drinking, melted lead was to be poured down his throat.'

Alā-ud-dīn's son, Humāyun, who ruled from 1457-61 A.D., was the Nero of the Deccan. In the words of the historian above quoted, 'Humāyun Shāh, abandoning himself to the full indulgence of his cruel propensities...caused...vicious elephants and wild beasts to be placed in the square, and cauldrons of scalding oil and boiling water for torture. Looking on from a balcony, he had his brother Hasan thrown to a ferocious tiger who tore him to pieces and devoured him. Ingenious tortures were invented by the king and inflicted on young and old of both sexes...He put the women servants of his household to death for the most trivial faults; and when any of the nobility were obliged to wait upon him, so great was their dread that they took a last leave of their families.' The death of this *Zālim* (tyrant) was commemorated by a versifier in a Persian chronogram:

> On the date of his death the world was full of delight,
> So 'delight of the world' gives the date of his death.

Humāyun's best legacy was his gifted minister, Khwāja Mahmūd Gāwān. The latter served under the next two rulers as well, viz., Nizām Shāh, who died within three years (1461-63 A.D.), and Muhammad Shāh III (1463-82 A.D.), who had him put to death on a malicious charge of

treason which was got up by his mendacious enemies at court. The innocent minister prophetically declared, as the executioner's hatchet descended on his neck, "The death of an old man like me is of little moment to myself, but to you (Muhammad) it will prove the ruin of an empire and of your own glory."

Truth, indeed, sits on the lips of dying men, and the empire of the Bahmanis did not last long after this murder, which was both a blunder and a crime. Muhammad Shāh died in 1482 A.D. and was followed by the imbecile Mahmūd who was only twelve years old at his accession. Though he reigned till 1518 A.D., he was a worthless prince who totally neglected his government, and spent his time "with low-born favourites in vulgar debauchery." It is no wonder that under him and after him, the provincial governors declared their independence one after another. The kingdom of Alā-ud-dīn Bahman Shāh was soon shrunk to the confines of the capital, Bidar, where four puppet Sultans were enthroned in succession by their ministers, until in 1526 A.D. the last of the Bahmani's Kaleem-ullah, sought help in vain from Bābur, and Amir Barid founded the new Barid-Shāhi of Bidar.

Before taking leave of this subject, it is necessary to recount the work of two great administrators: they were both ministers, not kings: (1) Saif-ud-dīn Ghūri, who served under the first five Bahmanis, and (2) Mahmūd Gāwān who served under the last three real rulers of the dynasty. While the kings were engrossed with their conquests and concubines, these two eminent men sustained the administration of the country, and indeed improved it.

When Alā-ud-dīn Bahman Shāh conquered Goa, Dhābol, Karhād and Kolhāpur in the west, and Kohīr and Bhongīr in the east, he felt impatient to subdue the whole country up to Cape Comorin, and like Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī, actually assumed the title of 'the Second Alexander', but the sober minister, Saif-ud-dīn, recalled him to a more practical and saner policy as the advisers of the great Khaljī and Muhammad Tughlak had done before. Though the second Bahmani Sultan, Muhammad I, is credited by Sir Wolseley Haig with having been "a diligent and methodical administrator," he was too much pre-occupied with war, wine and slaughter of the Hindus, to have either time or inclination for constructive statesmanship. The administrative organisation must, therefore, be ascribed to the initiative of his Ghūri minister, Saif-ud-dīn. The same remark must hold good even about Muhammad II after whom the old minister died, at the age of 104

years (1397 A.D.). When famine raged in the Kingdom, between 1387 and 1395 A.D., a thousand bullocks belonging to the transport establishment of the court were employed incessantly in importing corn from Gujarat and Mālwa, but sold at low rates "to Muslims only." Similarly, free schools were established for Muslim orphans at Gulbarga, Bidar, Kandhar, Elichpur, Daulatābad, Chāul, Dhābol, and other cities and towns, "in which children were not only taught, but were housed and fed at public expense. Special allowances were also given to readers of the Koran, reciters of the Traditions, and the blind."

The administrative system is thus described by Sir Wolseley Haig:—

"His (Muhammad I's,) system is worthy of record, for it was imitated first in the five states which rose on the ruins of the Kingdom, and, later, by Sivājī, the founder of the Marātha power. He appointed eight ministers of state: (1) *vakīl-us-saltana*, or lieutenant of the Kingdom, who was the immediate subordinate of the sovereign, and held the regency when he was absent from the capital; (2) *wazīr-i-kull*, who supervised the work of all of the ministers; (3) *amīr-i-jumla*, minister of finance; (4) *wazir-i-āshrāf*, minister of foreign affairs and master of the ceremonies (5) *wazir*, assistant minister of finance; (6) *peshwā*, who was associated with the lieutenant of the Kingdom and whose office was in later times, almost always amalgamated with his; (7) *kotwal*, chief or police and city magistrate in the capital; and (8) *sadri-i-jehan*, or chief justice and minister of religious affairs and endowments.

"The royal bodyguard consisted of 200 esquires to the king and 4000 gentlemen-troopers, divided into four reliefs, each of 50 esquires and 1000 troopers, commanded by one of the great nobles at the capital. The tour of duty of each relief was four days, and the whole force was commanded by one of the ministers, who however, performed his routine military duties by deputy."

The final reorganisation of the provinces, which were originally four as stated before, was the work of Mahmūd Gāwān, by common consent, the greatest of the Muhammadan administrators of the Deccan. Though a foreigner himself (Persian), he did not side with any of the factions in the Kingdom, which consisted in the main of the Deccanis and Habshis (Abyssinians) on the one side, and the Arabs, Persians, and Turks on the other. The tendency of the kings was on the whole to side with the foreigners in order to keep down the natives, but sometimes, as it happened in the present context, they fell a prey to the machinations of the Deccani nobles. "The natives of the Deccan," observes Sir Wolseley Haig, "were less energetic and enterprising than those of the more northern latitudes, and, being unable to compete with the hardy Arab, the intellectual Persian, and the virile Turk, were obliged to give place to them at court as well as in

camp." The feuds between them were also complicated by sectarian differences as well. The natives were all *Sunnis*, whereas among the foreigners were a large number of *Shiahs*. The conflicts thus arising were not confined to mere intrigues for place and power, but frequently found expression in pitched battles and bloody massacres. It was this intestinal strife, together with the degeneracy of the monarchs, that led to the rapid disintegration of the Bahmani Kingdom. But before its fall it attained its climax under Muhammad III and his great minister, Gāwān.

Goa, which had been taken by the Rāyas of Vijayanagara, was reconquered on the west coast, and Kanchi, the great temple city, which had never been touched by Muslim arms so far, was plundered and destroyed. The Bahmani dominions thus reached an extent never reached by former sovereigns; for the first time the Kingdom stretched from sea to sea, "its coast-line extending on the west from Bombay to Goa, and on the east from Coconada to the mouth of the Krishna." To tranquillise Telingana, Muhammad made Rājamahendri his residence for three years, and, at Mahmūd Gāwān's suggestion, made a far-reaching redistribution of the provinces. Telingana itself was divided into two: Wārangal being made the capital of the western, and Rājamahendri that of the eastern division. Berar was similarly distributed between Gāwilgarh (north) and Māhūr (south); Daulatābad into Daulatābad (east) and Junnar (west); and Gulbarga into Gulbarga (east) and Belgaum (west). The powers of the provincial governors were curtailed at the same time.

These were revolutionary changes in the eyes of those affected by them, and a conspiracy was soon hatched to destroy the author of the reorganisation. A document was forged to show that Mahmūd Gāwān was engaged in treasonable activities. The allegation was proved to Muhammad Shāh while he was in his cups, and an order for Gāwān's execution was extorted. The inebriated Sultan was thus got to murder his great minister, as he realised in his sober moments, but disillusionment came too late. This worked upon Muhammad's mind so much that he died of compunction within a year (1482 A.D.), "crying out with his last breath that Mahmūd Gāwān was slaying him." After this came the deluge.

Khwāja Mahmūd Gāwān, who had been made Khwāja Jahān, was seventy-eight years of age when he was made to pay the extreme penalty on 5 April 1481. He had faithfully served his masters during thirty-five years, and died cheerfully with the exclamation, "Praise

be to God for the blessing of martyrdom!" on his lips. He had honestly striven to heal the disastrous feud between the Deccanis and the Foreigners, and spent all his income on charities. Though fanatical, like most of his contemporaries, towards the Hindus, he led the life of a sincere Muslim, slept on a plain mattress, ate from earthen vessels, and loved to spend his time in the midst of his 3,000 books at his Bidar residence. "No department escaped his attention; he organised the finances, improved the administration of justice, encouraged public education, and instituted a survey of village lands to make the state demand of revenue just and equitable. Corrupt practices were put down, and those who were guilty of peculation were called to account. The army was reformed; better discipline was enforced, and the prospects of the soldiers were improved." (Ishwari Prasad, *Medieval India,* p. 443.) Meadows Taylor justly observes that the murder of Gāwān was the beginning of the end; 'with him departed all the cohesion and power of the Bahmani Kingdom.'

The Pentarchy:

Under the successors of Muhammad Shāh III (1482-1526 A.D.) the Kingdom split up into a Pentarchy: (1) the Amad-Shāhi of Berar, (2) the Adil-Shāhi of Bijapur, (3) the Nizām-Shāhi of Ahmednagar, (4) the Kutb-Shāhi of Golkonda, and (5) the Barid-Shāhi of Bidar. It could not be otherwise in a Kingdom having the character we have described. Athanasius Nikitin, a Russian merchant, who travelled in the Bahmani dominions between 1470 and 1474 A.D., noted that the Sultan was 'in the power of the nobles;' there was a Persian Boyar, 'a merchant prince' who kept an army of 200,000 men; 'Melik Khān keeps 100,000; Kharat Khān, 20,000; and many are the Khāns that keep 10,000 armed men.' In the midst of such feudal barons, the Sultan, though he went out with 300,000 troops of his own, there were among them '200 elephants adorned in gilded armour, ...100 dancers, and 300 common horses in golden clothing; 100 monkeys, and 100 concubines, all foreign.' As another historian tells us, "The people following the example of their king, attended to nothing but dissipation. Revered sages pawned their very garments at the wine-cellars, and holy teachers quitting their colleges retired to taverns, and presided over the wine-flask."

The history of the greatest of the five new kingdoms named above, viz. Bijapur and Golkonda, which alone are instructive, will be told in a later chapter. Here we might merely note the chronology of their independence. Berar became independent in 1484 A.D.; Bijapur,

in 1489; Ahmednagar, in 1498; Golkonda, in 1518; and Bidar, in 1526 A.D.

(3) *Madura:* This ancient Hindu kingdom of the Pāndyas was first conquered by the Muslims, as we have seen, under Malik Kāfur in 1311 A.D. But after this, owing to happenings in the North, already described, South India had a short respite from Muslim attacks until Mubārak sent Malik Khusru, in 1319 A.D., after the death of Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī and his great general. During this brief interval, Ravivarman Kulashekhara from Kerala invaded the Pāndya country, and carried his arms as far as Nellore on the east coast. This expedition was retaliated by the Kākatiya ruler, Pratāparudra II, who led an expedition up to the island of Srīrangam in the Kaveri. Malik Khusru, during his campaign of 1319, did nothing more than plunder the district of Madura, after which he was soon recalled to Delhi. The province of Ma'bar was then placed in the charge of a Muslim governor who rebelled during the reign of Muhammad Tughlak, in 1335 A.D. It was on this occasion that Madura became an independent Sultanate, under Jalāl-ud-dīn Ahsan Shāh. Madura and Ma'bar were never recovered by Delhi after this, though they continued to be governed by the Muslims for some time. Jalāl-ud-dīn, being killed by one of his own officers, five years later, was succeeded by his murderer, who usurped the throne and assumed the title of Alā-ud-dīn Udaujī. But within a year the usurper himself was killed, like William Rufus, by an unknown arrow. His successor, Kutb-ud-dīn Fīrūz Shāh, was also slain, within forty days of his accession, by Ghiyās-ud-dīn Dāmaghānī who was a great persecutor of the Hindus. Ibn Battuta records how this Sultan tortured and massacred a large number of Hindu men, women and children, and, having defeated the octogenarian Vīra Ballāla III, strangled and flayed him and had his skin stuffed and hung over the walls of Madura (1342 A.D.). His nephew, Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd Ghāzī, instituted a reign of terror in which he slew all his unsympathetic officers, including a son-in-law of the late Sultan whose bereaved wife he immediately married (1344 A.D.). Ibn Battuta left his court in sheer disgust. This monster of a monarch was followed by three other Sultans,—Adil Shāh, Fakhr-ud-dīn Mubārak Shāh, and Alā-ud-dīn Sikander Shāh, under the last of whom (c. 1378 A.D.) the Sultanate of Madura was finally extinguished by the growing Hindu power of Vijayanagara. Thus, ten years before the death of Fīrūz Tughlak, Muslim rule in Madura had come to an end.

Hindu Political Revival:

After this brief survey of Muslim rule in India, following the death of Fīrūz Tughlak (1388 A.D.), we must take a rapid review of the state of Hindu India during the same period, before the establishment of the next empire of the Crescent, viz., the Mughal Empire. This will comprise, so far as South India was concerned, principally of the history of Vijayanagara, whose foundation in 1336 A.D. we have referred to before. Of the ancient Hindu kingdoms of the south, surviving till the advent of Islam, the Yādavas, the Kākatiyas, the Hoysalas, and the Pāndyas, had fallen one after another. The Keralas alone, on the west coast, continued unconquered to the last. But before the final extinction of the Kākatiyas and the Hoysalas, their last rulers, Pratāparudra II and Vīra Ballāla III, had lit a torch that was not extinguished until after the fall of Vijayanagara in 1565 A.D. Though the exact details surrounding the creation of this great Hindu empire are shrouded in obscurity, there could be little doubt as to the circumstances of its genesis. Pratāparudra and Vīra Ballāla had fallen, not merely like heroes but also as martyrs. Indeed, as Sewell has put it, 'everything seemed but to be leading up to but one inevitable end—the ruin and devastation of the Hindu province the annihilation of their old royal houses, the destruction of their religion, their temples and their cities. All that the dwellers in the south held most dear seemed tottering to its fall.' The citadel with seven walls that was erected on the southern bank of the Tungabhadra, opposite Ānégūndi, was meant to be a bulwark against the forces of *adharma* let loose by the Mlechchas all over the land. The lesson of the fate of the little principality of Kampli in its vicinity, described earlier in connection with the rising of Bahā-ud-dīn, (1327 A.D.) had burnt into the hearts of the Hindu leaders of the south, and was never forgotten. An inscription of Mārappa, one of the five brothers whose names are associated in tradition with the foundation of Vijayanagara, declared that, evil having encompassed the earth, God 'caused Saṃgama (their father) to be born in a great royal line for the help of *Dharma*.' The five sons of Saṃgama, the most famous of whom were Harihara, Bukka and Kaṃpana, must have therefore appeared to their generation, and after, as the reincarnations of the Pāndavas acting under the inspiration of Srī Krishna in the person of Vidyātīrtha. The three elder brothers guarded the northern frontier from Goa in the west to Nellore in the east, while the two younger ones protected the south from the Sultanate of Madura. No better

opportunity could have been found for making the first effort to liberate their country from the hated domination of the Muslims, than during the anarchy let loose by Muhammad Tughlak. The example had, indeed, been set by the Muslim governor of Ma'bar in 1335 A.D., and the Hindus followed it up promptly by building the great fortress of Vijayanagara the very next year (1336 A.D.). In course of time it developed into the shape thus described by Abdur Razzāk, who visited Vijayanagara a century later (1443 A.D.) :—

'The city of Bijnagar,' he writes, 'is such that eye has not seen nor ear heard of any place resembling it upon the whole earth. It is so built that it has seven fortified walls, one within the other. Beyond the circuit of the outer wall there is an esplanade extending for about fifty yards, in which stones are fixed near one another to the height of a man; one half buried firmly in the earth, and the other half rises above it, so that neither foot nor horse, however bold, can advance with facility near the outer wall......From the northern gate of the fortress to the southern is a distance of two statute *parasangs*, and the same with respect to the distance between the eastern and the western gates. Between the first, second and third walls there are cultivated fields, gardens and houses. From the third to the seventh fortress, shops and bazars are closely crowded together. By the palace of the king there are four bazars situated opposite to one another. That which lies to the north is the imperial palace or abode of the Rai. At the head of each bazar, there is a lofty arcade and magnificent gallery, but the palace of the king is loftier than all of them. The bazars are very broad and long, so that the sellers of flowers, notwithstanding that they place high stands before their shops, are yet able to sell flowers from both sides. Sweet scented flowers are always procurable fresh in that city, and they are considered as even necessary sustenance, seeing that without them they could not exist. The tradesmen of each separate guild or craft have their shops close to one another. The jewellers sell their rubies and pearls and diamonds and emeralds openly in the bazar.'

Harihara and Bukka acted both cautiously and prudently, for neither of them assumed the insignia of royalty, although they acted quite like kings. It also shows their selflessness and the high aims which inspired them. Harihara died in 1343 A.D., and Bukka in 1379 A.D. Not until Harihara II, 1379-1404 A.D., was the title *Mahārājādhirāja* assumed ; he also claimed to be 'the supporter of the four castes and orders', as well as, 'the master in establishing the ordinances prescribed by the *Vedas*' and 'publisher of the commentaries on the *Vedas*.' The second and third rulers of Vijayanagara were the contemporaries of the first eight rulers of the Bahmani dynasty. During all these years, from the accession of Alā-ud-dīn Bahman Shāh (1347 A.D.) to the death of Harihara II (1404 A.D.) the two kingdoms were frequently at war, except during the short interlude of the reign of the peace-

loving Muhammad Shāh II. This truce, as we have noticed already, was broken by the adventurous Bukka II on the one side and Fīrūz Bahmani (1397-1422 A.D.) on the other. The latter led no less than twenty-four expeditions, mostly against his Hindu neighbours, Telingana and Vijayanagara, who acted in unison against their common enemy, until the Kākatiya power of Wārangal was extinguished by Ahmad Shāh, the next Bahmani ruler (1422-35 A.D.). We have noted how Devarāya I's pursuit of the goldsmith's daughter, at Mūdgal, led to his having to submit to the humiliation of yielding up his own daughter to the much married monarch, Fīrūz Shāh.

The monotonous wars of the period need not be followed any further. Though victory often lay with the Muslims, and the Vijayanagara territory was more than once devastated by the Bahmani troops, which even plundered the outskirts of the Hindu capital, there were no annexations made to the Bahmani kingdom, except on the side of Telingana. "Deva Rāya II (1421-48 A.D.), impressed with the facts that the Islamite armies owed their success largely to being better mounted than their opponents and supported by a large body of expert archers, tried the expedient of enlisting Muhammadans in his service and equipping them in the Bahmani fashion." Though this did not bear immediate fruit, under Krishnadeva Rāya, a century later (1509-29 A.D.), the Rāichūr Doab, between the Krishna and Tungabhadra rivers, was conquered by Vijayanagara. The quarter century preceding this culmination was one of great turmoil in the Hindu kingdom, two successive revolutions having been effected during the period. In 1485-6 A.D. Sāluva Narasinga, the powerful chief of Chandragiri, usurped the throne. For about forty years prior to this event, as Sewell has pointed out, "the kingdom passed from one hand to the other, in the midst of much political agitation, discontent, and widespread antagonism to the representatives of the old royal family, several of whom appear to have met with violent deaths." The usurper's son was treated in like fashion by his Tuluva general, Narasa Nāyaka in 1505 A.D. This is known as the Second Usurpation. Krishnadeva Rāya, named above, was the greatest ruler of the third dynasty of Vijayanagara, if not also the most eminent of all its kings.

The Glory that was Vijayanagara:

The Empire of Vijayanagara reached its zenith under this prince. It extended over the entire peninsula south of the Krishna river;

along the coast, it stretched from Salsette in the west to Cuttack in the east. Madura had been conquered from its Muslim rulers, as stated before, quite early in the history of the kingdom. The event was celebrated in very elegant Sanskrit verse by Gangā Devi the wife of its conqueror, Prince Kampana, in her *Madurāvijaya kāvyam*. But, in the words of Dr. Krishnaswami Aiyangar, "Krishna's reign marks the grand climacteric in the development of the empire, and the successful achievement of the objects for which it was actually founded." Domingos Paes, a contemporary Portuguese visitor, describes the Rāya as

'the most feared and perfect king that could possibly be, cheerful of disposition and very merry; he is one that seeks to honour foreigners and receives them kindly, asking about all their affairs whatever their condition may be. He is a great ruler and a man of much justice.'

It is difficult to surpass the following estimate of the king by V. A. Smith: "The dark pages of the sanguinary story of the medieval kingdoms of the Deccan, whether Hindu or Muhammadan, are relieved by few names of men who claim respect on their personal merits. The figure of Krishna Rāya stands out pre-eminent. A mighty warrior, he 'was in no way less famous for his religious zeal and catholicity. He respected all sects of the Hindu religion alike, though his personal leanings were in favour of Vaishnavism... Krishna Rāya's kindness to the fallen enemy, his acts of mercy and charity towards the residents of captured cities, his great military prowess which endeared him alike to his feudatory chiefs and to his subjects, the royal reception and kindness that he invariably bestowed upon royal embassies, his imposing personal appearance, his genial look and polite conversation which distinguished a pure and dignified life, his love for literature and for religion, and his solicitude for the welfare of his people; and above all, the almost fabulous wealth that he conferred as endowments on temples and Brāhmans, mark him out indeed as the greatest of the South Indian monarchs, who sheds a lustre on the pages of history.'"

The Empire, being broad-based upon the goodwill of the people of the entire peninsula, had developed rapidly. Though the Bahmani Kingdom remained a solid block in the north, the political power of the Muslims further south was quickly extinguished. Ibn Battuta writes, 'The inhabitants of Malabar generally pay tribute to the king of Honaur (North Kanara District), fearing as they do his bravery by sea. His army too consists of about 6,000 men. They are, nevertheless, a brave and warlike race. The present king is

Jamāl-ud-dīn Muhammad Ibn Hasan. He is one of the best of princes; *but is himself subject to an infidel king whose name is Harib* (Harihara I). The extinction of the Madura Sultanate has been referred to before. But the Vijayanagara rulers never aimed at the suppression of Islam. They not merely enlisted large numbers of Muslim soldiers, which of course was expedient, but also tolerated the practice of their religion within their dominions. As Barbosa noticed, "The king allows such freedom that every man may come and go, and live according to his own creed without suffering any annoyance, and without inquiry, whether he is a Christian, Jew, Moor or Heathen. Great equity and justice is observed by all." We have the testimony of Abdur Razzāk to illustrate the hospitality of these Hindu kings towards Muslim plenipotentiaries in the fifteenth century:

'One day messengers from the king (Devarāya II, 1443 A.D.) came to summon me,' writes the Persian envoy, 'and towards the evening I went to the court, and presented five beautiful horses and two trays each containing nine pieces of damask and satin. The king was seated in great state in the forty-pillared hall, and a great crowd of Brāhmaṇs and others stood on the right and left of him. He was clothed in a robe of zaitun satin, and he had round his neck a collar composed of pure pearls of regal excellence, the value of which a jeweller would find it difficult to calculate. He was of an olive colour, of a spare body, and rather tall. He was exceedingly young..... His whole appearance was very prepossessing. On being presented to him, I bowed down my head. He received me kindly, and seated me near him, and, taking the august letter of the emperor, made it over (to the interpreters), and said, "My heart is exceedingly glad that the great king has sent an ambassador to me."

'As I was in a profuse perspiration from the excessive heat and the quantity of clothes which I had on me, the monarch took compassion on me and favoured me with a fan of Khatai which he held in his hand. They then brought a tray, and gave me two packets of betel, a purse containing 500 *paṇams,* and about 20 *miskals* of comphor, and, obtaining leave to depart, I returned to my lodging.

'The daily provision forwarded to me comprised two sheep, eight fowls, five *maṇs* of rice, one *maṇ* of butter, one *maṇ* of sugar, and two *varahas* of gold......Twice a week, I was summoned to the presence towards the evening, when the king asked me several questions respecting the Khākān-i-Sa'id, and each time I received a packet of betel, a purse of *paṇams,* and some *miskals* of comphor.'

Abdur Razzāk further tells us that the city was 'exceedingly large and populous' and the King 'of great power and dominion.' The country was 'for the most part well-cultivated and fertile,' and 'about 300 good sea ports' belonged to it. There were more than 1000 elephants 'lofty as the hills and gigantic as demons'. The army

consisted of 11,00,000 men. 'In the whole of Hindustan,' he adds, 'there is no *Rai* more absolute than himself...The Brāhmaṇs are held by him in higher estimation than all other men.' We might find the reason for this in the characterisation of this class by Nuniz as "honest men, given to merchandise, very acute and of much talent, very good at accounts." Paes speaks of them as the fairest men and women in the land. Though *Sati* was practised at Vijayanagara, there were women wrestlers, astrologers, and sooth-sayers; and the King, according to Nuniz, had in his service women who wrote all accounts of expenses that were incurred inside the gates. There were also women chroniclers "whose duty was to write all the affairs of the Kingdom and compare their books with those of the writers outside." Withal, prostitution in the city was so enormous that the state realised a revenue of 12,000 *paṇams* out of them. This amount, according to Abdur Razzāk, went 'to pay the wages of the policemen.' The business of these men was 'to acquaint themselves with all the events and accidents that happen within the seven walls, and to recover everything that is lost,...otherwise they are fined.'

In Defence of Realm and Religion:

In the midst of wealth and luxury, such as had rarely existed in any imperial city in India till then, the kings tried to keep up their martial vigour and that of their prosperous subjects by a system of licensed duelling, which was freely indulged in by high and low, and themselves setting the example in matters of food and exercise. We learn from Nuniz that the Kings of Vijayanagara ate all things except the flesh of oxen or cows: "They eat mutton, pork, venison, partridges, hares, doves, quails, and all kinds of birds; even sparrows and rats, and cats and lizards, all of which are sold in the market of the city of Bisnaga." Bloody sacrifices, on such occasions as the *Navarātra* festival, are also described by contemporary witnesses 250 buffaloes, and 4,500 sheep were killed on the last day, their heads being struck off at a single blow each.

Krishnadeva Rāya may be taken as the very pattern of these rulers. In the words of Sewell, "He was physically strong in his best days, and kept his strength up to the highest pitch by hard bodily exercise. He rose early and developed all his muscles by the use of the Indian clubs and the use of the sword ; he was a fine rider, and was blessed with a noble presence which favourably impressed all who came in contact with him. He commanded his enormous armies in person, was able, brave and statesmanlike, and was withal a

man of much gentleness and generosity of character. He was beloved by all and respected by all."

The regular army of Vijayanagara, according to Nuniz, consisted of 50,000 infantry, 20,000 spearmen and shield-bearers, 3,000 men to look after the elephants, 1,600 grooms, 300 horse-trainers, 2,000 artificers, like blacksmiths, masons, carpenters, washermen, etc.; whereas, Paes places it at 703,000 foot, 32,600 horse, and 551 elephants, besides camp-followers, in 1520 A.D. This enormous force was felt necessary for the defence of the realm and religion against the aggressive Turushkas.

Rājasthān also Mobilises :

Though Rājasthān had nothing like Vijayanagara to boast of in material wealth and grandeur, during the same period, its preparations for meeting the Muslims in the field of battle were not less formidable in the north. Rāṇa Sangrāma Simha or Rāṇa Sanga who valiantly fought against Bābur, in 1527 A.D. at Kanua, was an exact contemporary of the more successful Krishnadeva Rāya of Vijayanagara. If the Hindu political revival of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries is to be fully appreciated, the histories of Rājasthān and Vijayanagara must be read together. The Rajputs were the first to bear the brunt of the Muslim attacks in India. We have seen how their heroic efforts failed under the leadership of the Gurjara-Pratihāras in the earlier, and of Jayapāla and Prithvirāja in the later stages of the first Muslim advance. The Rajput forces were then scattered, and Chitor itself, the Mecca of their chivalry, fell before the might of Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī, the builder of the first Empire of the Crescent in India. But the lion of the desert could not be slain by the scimitar so long as a single scion of the Sissodias breathed. Their eponymous ancestor Bāppa Rāwal, whom Mr. C. V. Vaidya has styled "the Charles Martel of India," for staying the Arab advance in the eighth century (c. 730 A.D.), had set up a tradition which was all but extinguished only with the fall of Chitor at the hands of Akbar in 1568 A.D., within three years of the destruction of Vijayanagara by the Deccani Muslims (1565 A.D.). The erection of the Tower of Victory, previously mentioned, by Rāṇa Kumbha, about the middle of the fifteenth century, may be taken as an outstanding landmark in the revival of Rājasthān. Its culmination was reached under Rāṇa Sanga who ascended the throne of Mewar in 1509 A.D., the year of Krishnadeva Rāya's accession, also, at Vijayanagara. The great Rāṇa was defeated by

Bābur (1527 A.D.) only two years before the death of the great Rāya (1529 A.D.). It is interesting to note that the Mughal invader recognised the greatness of both his eminent Hindu contemporaries before he encountered the forces of Hindu India on the field of Kanua. 'The most powerful of the pagan princes,' he wrote in his *Memoirs*, 'in point of territory and army, is the Rāja of Bijanagar... Another is Rāṇa Sanka, who has attained his present high eminence only in these later times by his own valour and his sword'. He further noted that 'His original principality was Chitor; during the confusion that prevailed among the princes of the Kingdom of Māndu, he seized a number of provinces which had depended on Māndu, such as Rantpur (Rantambhor), Sārangpur, Bhilsan and Chānderi'. There were also 'a number of other Rāis and Rājas on the borders and within the territory of Hindustan, many of whom', says Bābur, 'on account of their remoteness, or the difficulties of access into their country, have never submitted to the Musalman Kings'. But it is significant of the Hindu resurgence under the leadership of Mewar that many of them rallied to the cause of their realm and religion, as they did in the south under the Rāyas of Vijayanagara. Rāṇa Sanga did not fail to mobilise all his resources for the inevitable final contest: "Eighty thousand horses, seven Rājas of the highest rank, nine Raos, and one hundred and four chieftains bearing the titles of Rawul and Rawut, with five hundred war elephants, followed him into the field. The Princes of Marwar and Amber did him homage, and the Raos of Gwalior, Ajmer, Sikri, Raisen, Kalpek, Chanderi, Bundi, Gagraon, Rampura, and Abu, served him as tributaries or held of him in fief. His personal figure corresponded with his deeds: He exhibited at his death but the fragment of a warrior; one eye was lost in the broil with his brother, an arm in an action with the Lodi King of Delhi, and he was a cripple owing to a limb being broken with a cannon-ball in another, while he counted eighty wounds from the sword or the lance on various parts of his body."

If we apply the above description to Hindu India instead of Rāṇa Sanga, the picture will be equally truthful—heroic but tattered.

SOME RELEVANT DATES

A.D.	
1450-1526	Lodis rule at Delhi.
1453	Constantinople conquered by Turks.
1459-1511	Mahmūd Bégarha king of Gujarat.

A.D.	
1463-81	Mahmūd Gāwān minister of Bahmani kings; decline follows his murder.
1484	Berar independent.
1486	Sāluva Narasinga; First Usurpation at Vijayanagara. Diaz rounded cape of Good Hope.
1489	Bijapur independent.
1492	Columbus discovered America.
1498	Vasco da Gama at Calicut.
1505	Tuluva Narasa Nāyaka; Second Usurpation at Vijayanagara. Earthquake in Hindustan and Persia.
1507	First naval fight between Gujarat and the Portuguese.
1509	Krishnadeva Rāya's accession at Vijayanagara; Rāṇa Sanga's at Chitor. Henry VIII's, in England.
1510	Ismail Adilshāh at Bijapur; Goa taken by the Portuguese.
1514	Bābur king of Kabul.
1518	Golkonda independent.
1519	Bābur's first Indian expedition.
1520-66	Suleiman the Magnificent rules from Bagdad to Hungary; climax of Vijayanagara Empire.
1522	Domingos Paes Portuguese visitor at Vijayanagara.
1526	Bābur's Victory at Pānipat; Bidar became independent.
1535	Nuniz Portuguese visitor at Vijayanagara.

CHAPTER VIII

CHARACTER OF CRESCENTDOM IN INDIA

The history of Muslim Rule in India naturally divides itself into two sections: (1) the period of conquest and administrative experiment, and (2) the period of imperial organisation and cultural creativeness. There is in this history a definite growth and fulfilment which has been lost sight of or ignored by Western writers. Lane-Poole, despite his broad sympathies, sadly missed his mark when he saw in our medieval history "more a chronicle of kings and courts and conquests than of organic or national growth." Few other countries have had the unique good fortune of the organic and national growth that England has enjoyed through successive centuries of "freedom broadening from precedent to precedent." But such comparisons are rather misleading, and Lane-Poole was not quite justified in observing that, during the Medieval Age in India, "The vast mass of the people enjoy the doubtful happiness of having no history, *since they show no development*; apparently they are the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. Nor was there any such marked change *even in the principles and methods of government* as might be expected from the diversity of successive rulers of various races." People in the east may not change as often or as fast or in the same manner as those in the west, but a closer reading of our history will show that, even apparently, we are not the same "yesterday, today and forever." Not only did medieval India differ from ancient as she does from modern, but she was no more stagnant than Europe during the same age. We shall notice in the present chapter some at least of the social, political and cultural changes that resulted from the advent of the Crescent in this country. Lane-Poole is more correct when he observes that "History is always continuous; there can be no 'fresh start'; and each new period carries on much of what preceded it." In other words, each age is the parent of its successor: the early Muslim period (1206–1526 A.D.) was the seed-time of Mughal India (1526–1759 A.D.). The work which was begun by the former was completed by the

latter. The Mughal Empire was the culmination of the Khaljī and Tughlak Empires. A review of the salient features of the history we have traced in the previous six chapters will, therefore, serve as an introduction to the doings of the Mughals that we shall describe later in this study. For the sake of convenience, we might divide this review into (A) Résumé of Political Achievement, and (B) Cultural Rapprochement.

A. Résumé of Political Achievement

The Trail of Conquest:

We have seen how Muslim conquests in India commenced with the subjugation of Sind by the Arabs in 712 A.D. Multan was annexed in the following year. For a little over three centuries after this, India was free from fresh Muslim incursions. Then Mahmūd Ghazni, a Turk, began his famous plundering raids (1001–26 A.D.), but the only annexation he effected was the Punjab. Here his descendants exercised sovereignty during the next 160 years (1026–1186 A.D.). But the real and systematic conquest of Hindustan did not begin until a few years later. Muhammad Ghūri, having overthrown the Ghaznavids at home, advanced upon Lahore and took the last descendants of the Idol-breaker captive in 1186 A.D. The historic defeat of Prithvirāja Chauhān, on the field of Tarāin, followed six years afterwards (1192 A.D.); while Aibak and Bakhtiyār-ud-dīn carried Muslim arms further east, reaching Lakhnauti within ten years of the fall of Prithvirāja (1202 A.D.). Kanauj and Benares had fallen in 1193 A.D. Gwalior, Ajmer and Anhilwārā perhaps formed the southern-most limits at this stage of the advance of the Crescent. South of Bihar and Bengal was the impenetrable jungle of Gondwana. Muhammad Ghūri was an Afghan, or Turk long domiciled in Afghanistan; his followers too were either Afghans or Turks. But his successors who established themselves at Delhi were Turkish slaves or their descendants.

Till the death of Muhammad Ghūri, in 1206 A.D., the Muslim conquerors of Hindustan acknowledged a foreign suzerain: the Caliph of Bagdad, up to 871 A.D., in the case of the Arabs of Sind; and the King of Ghazni, except during the short interval of the Ghaznavids' retirement in Lahore, in the case of the Turks. After 1206 A.D., when Aibak established the 'Slave dynasty' at Delhi, the Muslim masters of Hindustan owned no sovereign outside India, though some of the Sultans paid ceremonious homage to the impotent Caliphs. Khizr Khān, the founder of the Saiyid dynasty, was the

only one who is supposed to have styled himself Timūr's representative; but even he struck coins in the name of the Tughlaks. Hence, it might be truly stated that independent Muslim rule in Sind and Multan began in 871 A.D., in the Punjab about 1160 A. D., and over the rest of Hindustan in 1206 A.D.

The next advance of the Crescent further south was made by Iltutmish, who invaded Mālwa in 1234 A.D., took the fortresses of Bhilsa and Māndu and destroyed the temple of Mahākāli in Ujjain. The Vindhyas were not crossed until Alā--ud-dīn Khaljī led his famous expedition to Deogiri in 1294 A.D. Gujarat was conquered three years afterwards, in 1297 A.D., and Mewar (1303 A.D.), Wārangal, (1307 A.D.) Dwārasamudra, (1310 A.D.) and Madura (1311 A.D.) followed in quick succession. These brought Muslim dominion to its widest extent ever covered by the Crescent, within a hundred and five years of the establishment of the Sultanate of Delhi (1206 A.D.). Though politically under its Hindu rulers, Muslims had long before this established important settlements on the Malabar coast, and penetrated into Kashmir in the north-west, where the first Muslim dynasty was founded by the Persian Shāh Mir in 1339 A.D. With the exception of the extreme end of the southern peninsula, and Orissa in the east, and Gondwana in Chota Nagpur, practically all the provinces of India found the Crescent in their midst. Tirhut was conquered in 1324 A.D. by Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughlak, Jājnagar in 1322, and Junāgarh in 1350 A.D. by Muhammad Tughlak, which served to round off the unfinished fringes of the Muslim Empire.

Katabolism of the Empire:

When this grand climacteric was reached, however, political katabolism set in. As we have noted before, during the dark days of Muhammad Tughlak, Ma'bar began the fatal process, in 1335 A.D. Bengal followed suit in 1337 A.D. and other provinces not long after. Thus, widest dominion was not held under Delhi for more than twenty-five years together (1311-35 A.D.). If the Sultanate of Delhi is to be reckoned as having been established with the fall of Prithvirāja and Jayachandra, in 1193 A.D., it lasted for 333 years up to Bābur's victory at Pānipat in 1526 A. D. During the greater part of this period, the rulers of Delhi enjoyed a fluctuating hegemony over most of Hindustan. The loss of Bengal in 1337 A.D. was a serious amputation. The separation of Madura and Telingana (1335), Daulatābad (1347), Gujarat (1396), Khāndesh (1399) and Mālwa (1401), considerably crippled the Empire. At one time, not merely were the dominions

of Delhi, too narrowly circumscribed, but even within the capital city itself, there were two rival Sultans, each claiming to be sovereign over the shadow of a vanished empire! By the law of the survival of the fittest, which was the only principle admitted by Islamic polity in practice, though not in theory, the time had come for a new power to arise in India. The pioneers had done their work, their best as well as their worst; they had plundered, destroyed, conquered, enslaved, made converts, slaughtered, ruled, extended dominion, put down rebellions, built edifices, canals, made prosperity possible, indulged in luxury, perpetrated inhuman crimes, and prepared the way for Nemesis. Retribution, when it came, proved relentless. The causes of their successes and failures may be considered with advantage at the close. Here we must have a look at their administration as a whole.

Political Empiricism:

Arab, Turk, Afghan, or Persian, they all belonged to one social scheme and they all worked alike. They brought no finished and perfect machinery with them, but, like all practical men, applied their downright pragmatism to each situation as it arose. Hence their government bore the anvil marks of the smithy in which it had been wrought. However crude the product, they were titans who had worked hammer and tongs at it. Though they failed in the end, others built on their foundations. One thing which marks out early Muslim polity in India, above everything else, is its *empiricism;* in this lay its strength as well as its weakness.

The pioneers of conquest, though they were not expert administrators, could not shirk the responsibilities that success in war devolved on them. Thus Imād-ud-dīn in Sind had to improvise a system of government which could not be readily assimilated to the traditional pattern. The conquered infidels were at first given no choice better than acceptance of Islam or death. But soon it was discovered that it was more worthwhile to spare them and utilise their services, which were indispensable, especially in the revenue administration, though they might be compelled to pay the *jizya.* Hence a vast Hindu population was suffered to survive, in the very first effort of Islam in India to subjugate them. Such accumulation of infidel subjects was bound to have far-reaching though, perhaps, insidious effects upon their conquerors.

In the second place, it is to be recollected that, after 871 A.D., the Arabs in Sind and Multan became virtually independent of the

Caliphate. The dismembered Indian province became more and more the asylum of all kinds of heretics (like the Karmatians), and thus a land not merely politically but also spiritually independent of the Commander of the Faithful. The later rulers of Sind and Multan were therefore a law unto themselves, and owned no master, religious or secular, except when they were temporarily compelled by some superior might from outside, as when Jām Babaniya was conquered by Fīrūz Tughlak. The conversion of its Rajput rulers, like the Sumrahs, to Islam, could not be without its own consequences on what ultimately turned out to be Islamic polity only in name. Islamic society was originally a theocracy, one and indivisible, of which the Caliph (after Muhammad's death) was the only head, spiritual as well as temporal. But the Jāms of Sind were normally their own sovereigns.

The great Idol-breaker of Ghazni, India's next Muslim conqueror, in spite of his acknowledgment of the pontificate of Bagdad, was by no means an orthodox stickler in matters political. He had felt commissioned to destroy idolatry and taken the vow of *jihād* on the infidels, plundered and destroyed Hindu temples, slaughtered, enslaved and converted thousands in India; but he too, like Imād-ud-dīn, appreciated the political value of even the unconverted Hindus. They were employed in the army, tolerated as feudatories like Rājyapāla of Kanauj, and preferred even in diplomatic service as in the case of Tilak. Mahmūd's successor, Masūd, as pointed out earlier, came to the throne after a clash of arms with his own brother Muhammad, whom he blinded and imprisoned. In the absence of a recognised law of peaceful succession, this precedent was invariably followed at the death of every Sultan. The law of the jungle dictated that the fittest should survive, and neither brother, nor father, nor uncle was spared. No sentiment or softer feeling stood between the ambitious and the throne. Thus did Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī and Muhammad Tughlak also succeed. Even a slave, if he was found capable, was acknowledged master, as in the case of Aibak, Iltutmish, and Balban; and at least once (in the case of Rāziya), woman too was given a chance to try conclusions with strong political rivals. Khusru, the convert who followed Mubārak Khaljī on the throne of Delhi, might also have succeeded had he not waged war on the True Faith. Profession of Islam, though it might be repudiated in actual conduct, was the sole criterion which, together with the power to wield the sword successfully, determined political inheritance. Masūd was a drunkard, but

he had been blessed by the Commander of the Faithful, and had the power to strike for the throne. But even he fell by the law which had enabled him to succeed for a time. From the point of view of pragmatic selection the unconverted infidel, Tilak, was found eligible to be used against the rebellious Niyāltagin, the Muslim viceroy of Masūd in the Punjab. All the later Sultans of Delhi, as well as their *Chelas* in the provinces, were content, when they were orthodox, with levying the *jizya,* and availed themselves more and more of the political services of their Hindu subjects. The Muslims made no doubt better soldiers of the Crescent, but the infidels were found to be more acute administrators. Khān-Jahān Makbūl, Fīrūz Tughlak's capable minister, was a converted Brāhmaṇ; Rāja Todar Mal, a Khatri, served under Sher Shāh and Akbar later, equally efficiently, without being circumcised. These two prominent instances may be taken as indicating the trend in Islamic polity in India, while Tilak in the eleventh century may be considered as the forerunner of Mān Singh in the sixteenth.

This brief survey of the personnel of Muslim government in India leads to but one inference, viz., that Individuals counted for everything and not any legal concept : whether that individual was a Turk, Arab, Persian, Afghan, Abyssinian or Hindustani, convert or infidel, even male or female, free or slave, high-born or of low origin, was of secondary importance. As Bābur observed about the Sultans of Bengal later, there was 'little of hereditary descent in succession to sovereignty...whoever kills the King, and succeeds in placing himself on the throne, is immediately acknowledged as King.' In the words of Erskine, "*It was the individual, not the law, that reigned.*"

In the provinces and the outlying parts of the Empire, more or less, the same practice prevailed. "The monarchy was a congeries of nearly independent principalities, *jagirs* and provinces, each ruled by an hereditary chief, or by a zamindar or delegate from Delhi; and the inhabitants looked more to their immediate governors, who had absolute power in the province and in whose hands consequently lay their happiness or misery, than to a distant and little-known sovereign." We have had a glimpse of the provincial administrations occasionally in the preceding chapters. There was not that degree of centralisation as was attained later under the Mughals. The conquered provinces were, indeed, placed in the charge of governors, appointed by the Sultan at Delhi, but they were responsible only for the regular payment of the stipulated annual tribute. If this was not

sent regularly to Delhi, the imperial Sultan came down with his army personally, or sent a trusted general or prince of the royal family, as Mubārak Khaljī and Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughlak did against Deogiri and Wārangal. Hindu Rājas, especially in the more distant or difficult tracts, were allowed to remain tributaries, as in the cases of Rām-achandra and Sankerdeo at Deogiri, Pratāparudra at Wārangal, Vīra Ballāla at Dwārasamudra, and Maldeo at Chitor. But if they proved too refractory, like Harapāla of Deogiri, they met with a terrible fate, and were replaced by Muslim governors. The tragedy of Bahā-ud-dīn Gashtasp, under Muhammad Tughlak, served to show that neither religion nor kinship weighed with the Sultan in visiting vengeance upon rebellious governors. The provincial governor, like the Sultan's Deputy at the capital, who managed all affairs in the absence of the sovereign, was called *Naib Sultan*. His duties were both civil and military, as no bifurcation in this respect was made in medieval India. The governor was, in fact, a miniature monarch, and therefore the head of all the departments of government, revenue, executive and judicial. If he was so inclined, he could wage war with foreign powers and extend the dominion, even without the sanction of the central government. If he persecuted the Hindus and devastated their temples, he was within his bounds, provided, of course, the regulation share of the sovereign Sultan was not misappropriated. Otherwise, everything short of contumacy against the Sultan was fair. The character of the provincial administration depended both upon the local governor and his subordinates, as well as upon the central authority. A few examples may be cited to illustrate this: (1) Oudh prospered considerably under its efficient and benevolent governor, Ain-ul-Mulk Multani, so much so, that Muhammad Tughlak could depend upon its abundance to relieve the distress caused by famine in the western Doab; (2) Daulatābad, during the same period, was governed by an equally good-natured nobleman, Kutlugh Khān, but the people suffered on account of the corruption that prevailed among the subordinate officials ; (3) at the same time, Mālwa groaned under the tyranny of Aziz Khummār, a law-born favourite of Muhammad Tughlak who had given him a *carte blanche*. Where the strong but abnormal methods of Muhammad Tughlak created only chaos, the mild and none too extraordinary measures of Fīrūz Tughlak proved eminently successful. These two Sultans, coming in such close sequence, and possessing such a contrast in character, afford an instructive study in the difficult art of government, demonstrating the futility of mere

impatient, revolutionary force, and the utility of sane, unsophisticated, constructive work. Fīrūz was no innovator, and he let sleeping dogs lie ; he recognised that, circumstanced as he was, the only road to recovery lay in parcelling out the Empire among a number of fief-holders, who should have sufficient independence and competence to keep them contented, at least for the time being. The Empire had been built up, not by incorrigible idealists, but by practical empiricists, and its foundations were not strong enough to bear the strain of any erratic genius. However, there was always scope for a constructive peace.

The Hierarchy of the Sultans:

There were in all about thirty-two Sultans who ruled at Delhi, from Aibak to Bābur. They reigned during exactly 320 years (1206-1526 A.D.), making an average of ten years for every Sultan. The longest reigned of them all was Fīrūz Tughlak (1351-88 A.D.), though the widest dominions (for however short a time) were owned by Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī and his successors down to Muhammad Tughlak (1311-35 A.D.). But the measure by which they must be judged is neither that of time nor space, since both have failed to endure. They ought to be appreciated in terms of the legacies they have left behind. Even according to this criterion, Fīrūz Tughlak would beat all others; but neither his two immediate predecessors (Muhammad and Ghiyās-ud-dīn), nor Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī deserve to be ignored. Likewise do the other Sultans merit some notice, if only because they present us with a proper perspective. Such a review of the entire hierarchy of the Sultans of Delhi will also reveal to the reader the core of their significance, which Lane-Poole, and such others as have subscribed to his view, missed in "the chronicle of kings and courts and conquests."

Lane-Poole, however, did not fail to find 'ample scope for the realization of strangely vivid and dramatic situations' in 'such contrasted characters as those of Alā-ud-dīn, Muhammad Tughlak, Bābur, Akbar and Aurangzeb,' who, according, to him, " may rival any portrait gallery that could be collected in Europe in the same four centuries." It was round the lives of great men, and a few great women, among the rulers, in whose character and life he saw "infinite variety," he thought, "the chief interest of the Mediæval Period centres." But closer observation will show that the period also marked a change 'in the principles and methods of government' as well. From Mahmūd Ghazni (so far as his activities in India were concerned) to Akbar was a far cry; the former was content to be a

marauder, while the latter would not be satisfied with anything short of a national state. Yet, history being always continuous, the transition implied no violent change; and, as stated before, the Empire of the great Mughals was but the culmination of an evolutionary process which began with the predatory raids of the first Muslim adventurers.

Ignoring the Arab episode in Sind, Mahmūd Ghazni acted as the first poineer and path-finder for Islam in this country. His raids, therefore, marked only the first stage in the creation of an Indo-Muslim polity. The track was followed up, in the second stage, by the permanent conquests effected by Muhammad Ghūri and his slaves. The third stage was marked by the establishment of a Muslim empire with its head-quarters in India, and not outside. With Delhi as their capital, Iltutmish and Balban tried to consolidate their Kingdom without attempting mere expansion. Theirs was only a military occupation of the land, and no lasting dominion could be founded before the jungle was cleared. So they employed all their energies in securing their hold, and there was ample police work to be done. This necessary preliminary task being accomplished by the Slaves, the Khaljī's marched a stage further. Alā-ud-dīn, as already remarked, was the first experimenting Muslim administrator in India. But being a very practical man, though he was very ambitious, he allowed his better judgment to prevail in all matters of government. Fanatical though he was, in his policy towards the Hindus, he did not submit to the dictation of the doctors of Islam. "I do not know whether this is lawful or unlawful," he declared; "whatever I think is for the good of the state, or suitable for the emergency, that I decree; and as for what may happen to me on the approaching Day of Judgment, that I know not." This was a bold and revolutionary declaration of policy for a Muslim monarch of medieval India to make. Monarchy itself was an innovation in the democratic society of Islam. Somehow it had come to stay, and it made amends by paying sedulous homage to the Caliphate even when that institution had become a mere shadow. But Alā-ud-dīn's assertion of his own authority over the heads of the theologians indicated not merely that the Muslim monarchy was firmly settled in this country, but also that it was going to be more and more secular in its political outlook. He was followed by the more adventurous Muhammad Tughlak, who, while he affected to be deeply religious, was at heart an innovating rationalist. He struck hard at everything that was effete. He destroyed the old nobility, and encouraged foreigners. He tolerated

the Hindus more liberally than his predecessors, and employed the Mughals in large numbers in his army. Like Peter the Great of Russia leaving old Moscow for his new capital of Petrograd, Muhammad forsook Delhi for Daulatābad. He launched upon reform in every direction, and seemed to stop short of nothing. He defied the *Ulema*, perhaps, more flagrantly than Alā-ud-dīn, and did not fear to antagonise them. In the opinion of Dr. Ishwari Prasad, "It was impossible for a man of his rational frame of mind to submit to the cramping influence of a narrow sectarianism, and his mind, liberalised by his wide culture and contact with men of different nationalities, refused to give assent to what was inconsistent with public interest and his own authority...He deprived the priestly class of its long enjoyed monopoly of the administration of justice, constituted himself into the Supreme Court of Appeal and freely revised, altered and rescinded the decisions of *Qazis* and *muftis*. He imposed a strict supervision over the administration of *waqf* properties and cashiered the *mutawalis*, who were mostly Shaikhs and Maulvīs, for their malpractices...Muhammad's reign represents a struggle between philosophical rationalism and ecclesiatical dogmatism." (*Qaraunah Turks*, pp. 257-9.) Though the priestly domination was fully restored in the next reign, the Muslim state by now had definitely turned the corner, and become liberal in all but the religious sphere. The wave of religious reactionarism that followed the death of Muhammad Tughlak, indeed, continued up to the advent of the Mughals, but the rulers having been fairly Indianised, the country was no longer like a beleaguered city. The history of Delhi was now being repeated in the provinces, especially in the new Bahmani Kingdom, founded in 1347 A.D. Religious persecution, chiefly through heavy taxation of the Hindus, destruction of their temples, and even forced conversions, continued, but in a sporadic form. At the same time enlightened and broad-minded Muslim Sultans were also beginning to appear, like Zain-ul-Ābidīn in Kashmir (1417-67 A.D.) and Husain Shāh in Bengal (1493-1518 A.D.). These were the forerunners of the great Renaissance that was to follow.

Administrative Improvement:

The test of a political system is not so much its power of conquest, but good administration; but administration itself is never good enough at any given moment. Its character, to a considerable extent, is determined by the conditions in which it has to function. Time and place are of the essence of all government, and we have

shown above how it depended also on the character of the Sultans and their subordinates. The composition of the subject populations was another factor to be reckoned with. With increasing association between the conquerors and the conquered, the state of belligerency was bound to dissolve into more harmonious relations. The social and cultural aspects of this rapprochement will be considered later. Before doing that, it is necessary to take note of the administrative adjustments that the Muslim rulers found it expedient to make. A review of the government, from Balban to Bābur, will show how administrative improvement went hand in hand with the extension of Muslim rule in India. It is not to be forgotten, however, that this depended entirely upon the individual characters of the Sultans at the capital and the governors in the provinces.

The first capable administrator the conquerors produced in India, as we have noticed, was Ghiyās-ud-dīn Balban. He ruled for twenty years as chief minister, under Nāsir-ud-dīn Muhammad, and for another twenty years as sovereign Sultan. During these two score years (1246–86 A.D.) he dominated over Hindustan, as none before him, and eminently succeeded in accomplishing his three-fold task : of keeping off the Mongols, suppressing rebellious governors, and repressing the Hindus. He did more besides. As Baranī says, 'he maintained the dignity, honour and majesty of the throne in a manner that could not be surpassed'. When he had Malik Baqbaq of Badāun, and Haibat Khān of Oudh, both nobles of considerable status, flogged and humiliated, he set up a precedent in the administration of justice that was relentlessly followed by all Muslim rulers who came after him. Muhammad Tughlak's punishment of his own nephew, and Ahmed Shāh of Gujarat's execution of his own son-in-law, may be cited as examples out of numerous cases of a like nature. This was one aspect of Muslim autocracy that came very near to the reign of law which is no respector of persons, and is commendable despite its apparent ferocity. Under Muhammad Tughlak, we are also told, the mother of Prince Masūd was found guilty of adultery and, in accordance with the law of Islam, she was stoned to death. The terrible fate of Gashtasp, for the crime of treason, has been referred to more than once. Much of this ferocity was mitigated by Fīrūz Tughlak, who abolished numerous forms of torture, and thus tempered justice with mercy. This in itself constituted a welcome advance, in an important aspect of administration, that one of the most conservative

of Muslim monarchs of medieval India made even in that truculent age.

After Balban came Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī, whom we have characterised as a bold experimentalist in administration. We need not repeat here all the evidence, in confirmation of this estimate, which the reader will find elsewhere in this book. The secularisation of his autocracy, the substitution of cash-payment, as far as possible, in place of the pernicious system of granting fiefs to soldiers, the keeping of regular records and muster-rolls in the army, the branding of horses for identification, the control of prices and commodities and organisation of the markets, and the abolition or restriction of liquor traffic, done with whatever motive, were from the point of view of administrative improvement a distinct advance.

Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughlak, though not an innovator, ensured, during his short regime (1320-25 A.D.), a quiet prosperity, though it proved a lull before the stormy reign of his successor. His great contribution was the purification he effected in all departments of government which had become corrupt in the preceding years. He was the first Muslim ruler in India to be largely guided by a genuine desire for public weal. He did nothing, and allowed nothing to be done by others, that would have blocked the path of progress, or made the country suffer. His revenue policy was governed by the principles of moderation and justice. He revived the postal service, and his police and judicial organisation was so efficient that 'the wolf dared not seize upon the lamb.' Had he been followed by his nephew Fīrūz, instead of his son Muhammad, the country would have been spared the agonies of a talented tyrant's erratic experiments in administration. But Muhammad, quixotic though he was, made his own contributions to governmental reform. The failure of his token currency and attempt to change the capital, ought not to blind us to his undoubted services to administrative progress. His refinement of the coinage has been commented upon already. The lining out of the 700 miles' route from Delhi to Deogiri, with all its facilities and comforts for travellers, was in itself a marvel of administrative achievement. His heroic efforts at famine-relief, illustrated by the establishment of a great camp at Swargadwārī, the distribution of lavish doles, the appointment of a Royal Commission for land-survey, and generous subsidising of agricultural improvement, all showed the purity of his intentions, and the great advance that the Muslim rulers in India had made since the days of Mahmūd Ghazni for

whom the land of the infidels was only a rich quarry to despoil and devastate. Muhammad Tughlak strove neither to plunder nor to destroy infidelity, but rather to create an Ideal State according to his vision—no man could do better—though he defeated his own purposes through impatience and want of sufficient circumspection. But despite his "tragedy of high intentions self-defeated," he carried forward Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī's war on sacerdotalism and tried to liberalise the administration by making it more cosmopolitan. He abolished *sati*, organised poor-relief, established schools and hospitals, patronised arts and industries, and showed beyond doubt that he aimed at enlightened administration. This policy, begun by Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī, sustained by Ghiyās-ud-dīn, and carried forward by Muhammad, reached its culmination under Fīrūz Tughlak and Sikander Lodi.

The last two sovereigns differed from Muhammad Tughlak in being narrowly sectarian. But apart from their religious fanaticism, their principles of secular administration were in keeping with the trend in Muslim polity that we have traced so far. An account of the administrations of both Fīrūz and Sikander has already been given. The former abolished various forms of torture, relieved unemployment, reduced the burdens of taxation on Musalmans, built a beautiful system of canals, and considerably enhanced the prosperity of the country at large, so that 'By the blessing of God, and favourable seasons, abundance of the necessaries of life prevailed, not only in the capital, but throughout his dominions.' 'Such rules were made that the *raiyats* grew rich and were satisfied...Their homes were replete with grain, property, horses, and furniture; every one had plenty of gold and silver; no woman was without her ornaments, and no house was wanting in excellent beds and couches. Wealth abounded and comforts were general. The whole realm of Delhi was blessed with the bounties of the Almighty.'

Sultan Sikander Lodi was the last of the great rulers of Delhi before the Mughals. He centralised the administration, had his *firmāns* read out to the populace in all parts of his empire, instituted a strict inspection and audit of accounts, safe-guarded the interests of traders and agriculturists, administered relief to the indigent, released prisoners on festive occasions, and maintained a close watch upon all happenings from day to day. 'No one was arbitrarily deprived of his jagir, and an established custom was never abrogated.' Similar conditions of material welfare continued up to Bābur's invasion, though much political turmoil was created by Sikander's

successor Ibrāhim. According to the *Tarikh-i-Dāudi,*

'One of the most extraordinary phenomena of Sultan Ibrāhim's time was that corn, clothes, and every kind of merchandise, were cheaper than they had ever been known to be in any other reign, except perhaps in the time of Sultan Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī; but even that is doubtful... Ten *maunds* of corn could be purchased for one *Bahloli*; five *sirs* clarified butter and ten yards of cloth could be purchased for the same coin. Everything else was in the same exuberance; the reason for all which was that rain fell in the exact quantity which was needed, and the crops were consequently luxuriant, and produce increased tenfold beyond the usual proportion... A respectable man with a family dependent on him might obtain wages at the rate of five *tankās* a month. A horseman received from 20 to 30 (*tankās*) as his monthly pay. If a traveller wished to proceed from Delhi to Agra, one *Bahloli* would, with the greatest ease, suffice for the expenses of himself, his horse, and escort.'

Making allowance for the very obvious exaggeration in the above account of an admiring Afghan, writing about the golden past of Pathan rule, the picture suggests that administrative improvements, from the days of Balban to those of Bābur, had resulted in considerable prosperity to the land and people, especially under the Khaljīs, Tughlaks, and Lodis.

The Mechanism of Government:

Having surveyed some of the salient features of Muslim rule in India, we might, at this stage, have a glimpse of its machinery of government. The first observation we have to make is that the original Theocracy of the Prophet and the Caliphs had given place to monarchy with nominal allegiance to the Caliphate, even before the creation of the Sultanate of Delhi. The Sultans were all dictators, but most of them, being orthodox Muslims, submitted to the *Ulema* or doctors of Islam for the declaration of the law, and frequently proclaimed their loyalty to the Commander of the Faithful. But the exigencies of the situation in India soon demanded the assertion of secular sagacity against the sacerdotalism of the theologians. The impracticable dictates of uncompromising Kāzis, like Mughis-ud-dīn of Bayāna, could not be followed literally in a country teeming with irrepressible infidels as India was. "God has commanded the abasement of the Hindus"; but the Hindus could not be abased. "The Prophet has also enjoined their spoliation, plunder and enslavement;" but spoliation, plunder and enslavement had been practised too long, and had come under the law of diminishing returns. "If the tax-collector chooses to spit into the mouth of a Hindu, his duty is to open his lips submissively so that he may do so;" but the Hindu too often preferred to be

a martyr. From the days of Imād-ud-dīn in Sind the hated infidel had been found indispensable. Under these circumstances, the practical wisdom of the Sultans prevailed over the irresponsible advice of the *Ulema*. Hence the revolt of Alā-ud-dīn and Muhammad against priestly domination. In the field of practical politics Alā-ud-dīn's dictum became the watchword of the administration: "I do not know whether this is lawful or unlawful; whatever I think to be for the good of the state, or suitable for the emergency, that I decree."

The Sultan was thus all in all. He was the source of all power and justice. He was the sovereign head, and commander of the army. He was the pay-master. His will was law. The nobles and officials depended on his favour, and carried out his commands. He might consult them or insult them, as he might choose. Normally and in practice, no office, from the King to his subordinates, was considered as hereditary. Every one had to earn his place and keep it by dint of merit. The unworthy and weak went to the wall by the operation of the inexorable law of the survival of the fittest. Occasionally, a mild and benevolent ruler, like Fīrūz Tughlak, might respect hereditary titles, but the rule was otherwise.

(1) Next to the Sultan was the *Naib*, or Deputy of the Kingdom, who acted for the King during his absence from the capital. Malik Kāfur, Prince Juna Khān, and Khān-Jahān Makbūl are some well known examples of persons filling this high office. As stated before, the provincial governors, being viceroys, were also known by the same title of Naib-Sultan.

(2) The *Kāzi-al-kuzat*, or Lord Chief Justice, also called *Sadr-i-jahān*, was the head of the judicial department, under him was (a) the *kazi* who pronounced judgment, (b) the *mufti* who expounded the law, (c) the *Kotwāl* or public prosecutor, (d) the *muhtāsib* or censor of public morals, and several other officials including an army of spies known as the *mānhis*. The *Hākim* was the magistrate. The law administered officially was the Islamic law of the *Koran* and the *hādis*, but in civil matters the Hindus had some judicial autonomy in their *panchāyats*. There was also a *Mir-Arz* or receiver of petitions.

(3) The chief finance officers were (a) the *Diwān-i-Ashrāf* or Accountant-General, (b) the *Mustaufi* or Auditor General of Imperial Accounts, and (c) the *Bakshi-i-fauj* or Pay-master of the army,—all

acting under the *wazir* and the *Diwān-i-wizārat* or the revenue office. Other important officials were (4) the *Hājib* or Lord Chamberlain, (5) the *Vakil-i-dār* or Keeper of the keys, (6) the *Amir-i-Akhur* or Superintendent of the stables, (7) the *Mir Imārat* or Chief Engineer, (8) the *Amir Kohi* or Director of Agriculture, and (9) the *Shaikh-al-Islam* or Chief Pontiff of the Realm.

The provincial governments took more or less after the central model, the governor being a replica of the Sultan. The system of farming out revenues prevailed for the most part, and the whole Empire was composed of innumerable fiefs or Assignments. The imperial army maintained at the capital was perhaps at its highest (370,000) for some time under Muhammad Tughlak. In time of war it was reinforced with contingents from the provinces maintained out of the assignments. Muster-rolls were kept for horses from the time of Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī. There was a postal service which worked fairly successfully, keeping up a close contact between the capital and the provinces. This was worked by a system of horse and foot relays placed at intervals from three in a *kos* to one every four miles. The following interesting account of it is given by Dr. Ishwari Prasad:—

"At every post ten swift runners were stationed, well-equipped for the journey, armed with staffs with ringing bells attached to their top. It was their duty to carry letters and messages from one place to another. The courier took his letters in one hand and his staff which was two yards in length in the other and ran at full speed and handed over the letters to the next runner who kept himself ready in advance. In this way letters were conveyed from one place to another with great facility and quickness in spite of long distances. Sometimes fruits and other edibles from Persia and Khorasan were also brought for the Sultan by this post. At each of these postal stations the state had built, for the comfort of the wayfarers, mosques, reservoirs of drinking water, and markets where necessaries of life could be purchased. The post was also used at times to convey criminals guilty of serious offences, to the capital or the headquarters of the province to receive immediate punishment. From Delhi to Daulatābad, at every station, drums were placed, which were beaten when an unusual event occurred in either of the two cities and in this way the Sultan was quickly informed of what happened in either city during his absence...Ibn Batūtah writes that when he was in Daulatābad the Sultan used to get Ganges water for drinking purposes from the north by means of this post."

When the Empire had reached its widest extent it was composed of twenty-three provinces:

(1) Badāun, (2) Bihar, (3) Delhi, (4) Deogiri, (5) Dwārasamudra, (6) Gujarat, (7) Hānsi, (8) Jājnagar, (9) Kalanaur, (10) Kanauj, (11) Kara, (12) Kuhram, (13) Lahore, (14) Lakhnauti, (15) Mā'bar,

(16) Mālwa, (17) Multan, (18) Oudh, (19) Samana, (20) Sehwān (21) Sirsuti, (22) Telang, and (23) Uch.

The Treatment of Infidels:

In the midst of plethoric plenty famine has sometimes stalked over this country carrying away thousands at a time. The conquerors had devastated the land with war and plundering raids and looted enormous wealth from temples and royal treasuries. They spent this mostly in mobilising larger armies and luxuriating in their capitals. Before the advent of the Muslims the people in the villages had taken care of themselves when the kings neglected them. They were left unmolested even in times of war. This immunity was destroyed by the Muslims. Those who did not scruple to murder their own nearest relations in order to grasp at power and pelf were not the people to spare infidel populations. Neither age nor sex afforded sanctuary where men, women and children were alike slaughtered, enslaved or converted. We have noted how at times heaps of the dead were left to putrefy, contaminating the atmosphere for miles around. The vast mass of the people continued to be Hindus despite the havoc wrought in their midst by the foreigners. They were made to pay very heavily for the crime of sticking to their ancestral religion. Besides having to pay the *jizya*, the Hindus had to bear more than their share of other taxes. Islamic tradition not only sanctioned the invidious treatment of the infidels, but made it a duty to exact from them the price of even their limited toleration to the full. A decree of Caliph Omar II ordered the levying of double the normal taxes on trade in the case of the *Zimmi*. The fiat of another Caliph, Al-Mutawakkil, laid down rules regulating the dress the Christians were permitted to wear, and the saddles in which they could ride. We have seen how Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī followed a similar policy in India. The Hindus, according to him, 'will never become submissive and obedient till they are reduced to poverty.' Hence they were taxed to the extent of half the produce of their lands, besides *jizya* and taxes on buffaloes, goats and milch-cattle. 'At my command they are ready to creep into holes like mice.' They were not to be left sufficient competence "to enable them to keep a horse to ride on, to carry arms, to wear fine clothes, or to enjoy any of the luxuries of life."

This might be taken as the fairly normal condition of the Hindus under most of their Muslim rulers. There may have been some

slight mitigation in the time of Muhammad Tughlak, but his was a solitary exception, so far as Delhi was concerned. Even this temporary abatement was more than compensated for during the reactionary régime that continued thereafter until the advent of the Mughals. That occasionally the Sultan happened to be the son of a Hindu mother or the chief minister a converted Brāhmaṇ made no difference ; on the contrary, by a strange law that is worthy of investigation, they turned out to be the more fanatical, as in the case of Fīrūz Tughlak and Khān-Jahān Makbūl. Under the régime of these two, even Brāhmaṇs, who had been hitherto exempted from *jizya*, were forced to pay it ; while the Muslims, whose burdens had always been lighter, were further relieved by the remission of numerous imposts which were not sanctioned by Islamic law. ["The income of the state according to the orthodox jurists consisted of (1) the *Jizya* from the subject populations, (2) the *Usher* or 1/10 from the Muslims who held land of the state, (3) a tax on trade, (4) natural products taken from the subject population, (5) tribute from foreign powers, (6) 1/5 of the spoils acquired in war, (7) and the *Khiraj* or land-tax from non-Muslims who held land."—Dr. Ishwari Prasad, *Mediæval India*, p. 71.] By burning a Brāhmaṇ alive at the palace gates, for the crime of publicly worshipping in his own way and attracting even Muslim devotees, Fīrūz and Makbūl laid the coping stone over their persecution of the Hindus. Sikander Lodi, another despot, who was most benevolent towards his co-religionists, not content with destroying and desecrating their temples, prohibited Hindus from bathing at the sacred *ghāts* on the Jamuna and most erratically even banned barbers from shaving them. Under the Bahmanis, one ruler, while famine was raging in the country, ordered the regular importation of corn from Mālwa and Gujarat to be sold at low prices, "but only to the Muslims." Ahmed Shāh of the same dynasty celebrated his raids into Vijayanagara territory by killing every 20,000 men, women and children he captured; and, according to Ferishta, Muhammad Shāh I Bahmani killed no less than 500,000 Hindus during his reign. The slaughter of 100,000 infidels by order of Timūr before he entered Delhi, when even the pious and learned Maulana Nāsir-ud-dīn Omar, who had never killed a sparrow in his life, slew fifteen Hindus with his own hand, may be taken as typical of the Muhammadan conquerors' attitude towards the hated idolaters of India. But that, out of all this turmoil and agony and slaughter, a new order should arise was inevitable. The Wycliffe of this political Reformation was Zain-ul-Ābidīn of Kashmir.

The Condition of the Country:

We have at least three good witnesses to enlighten us on the general conditions in the country, from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries. It is also fortunate that all of them happened to be foreigners. They were (1) the Venetian Marco Polo, who visited South India between 1288 and 1293 A.D., (2) the Moorish Ibn Battuta, who travelled widely in most parts of the country between 1334 and 1342 A.D., and (3) Mahuan a Chinese interpreter who was in Bengal in 1406 A.D. It is a great relief to learn something of the 'simple annals of the people' from the pages of these writers, after having surveyed the sickening tale of 'kings and courts and conquests' in which alone the Muslim chroniclers appeared to be interested. There were also others like the Persian Wassāf whom we have mentioned before.

All the writers named above agree in their estimate of the general prosperity of the country, especially in Bengal, Ma'bar and Gujarat. Marco Polo, as well as Ibn Battuta bear witness to the flourishing trade at the ports like Kāyal, Calicut, Cambay and Broach. Merchants came from Kis, Hormes, Dofar, Soer, etc., bringing with them mostly horses, gold, silver and copper, while they carried back only commodities of herbs and gums, i.e. pepper, ginger, indigo, etc. There was also a precious pearl trade at Kāyal (on the Tāmraparni) which Marco Polo describes as 'a great and noble city.' Cotton was the staple product and was widely cultivated, its plants growing to the height of 'full six paces.' In the Telugu country they wove fine fabrics out of this: "In sooth they look like tissue of spider's web!" says Marco Polo; " there is no king nor queen in the world but might be glad to wear them." The people have also, he adds, "the largest sheep in the world, and great abundance of all the necessaries of life." In Ma'bar, parents trained their boys at the age of thirteen "to be very dexterous and keen traders." The Indian merchants of Gujarat were the best and most truthful in the world. Foreign dealers found them very loyal, for they sought "zealously the profit of the foreigner," asking no commission beyond what they were pleased to bestow.

Except at the recognised ports, piracy was rampant in the seas, but travelling by land was not unsafe. Horses were so much valued, says Marco Polo, that hardly any ship came to India without bringing horses along with other commodities. The king of Thāṇa permitted piracy on the understanding that all horses captured should

be considered as State property. The Indian vikings did not murder their victims but said, "Go along with you and get more gain, and that mayhap will fall to us also!" The way to collect debts from evasive borrowers was very queer. The creditor if he succeeded in drawing a circle round the debtor, the latter would not dare to pass outside it without the creditor's permission "for fear of the penalty of the law." Marco Polo witnessed a Rāja being thus treated by a foreign merchant.

Telingana was ruled by Queen Rudramma, "a lady of much discretion." During forty years "she had administered her realm as well as ever her husband did, or better; and as she was a lover of justice, of equity and of peace, she was more beloved by those of her kingdom than ever Lady or Lord of theirs before." Many women, when their husbands died, burned themselves along with the body, and won great praise for doing so. The Hindus were strict vegetarians, and abstained from alcohol contenting themselves with chewing *pān*. They were extremely cleanly and avoided the contamination of drinking from common vessels. In the estimation of the Venetian, they were also superstitious, believing as they did in astrology, "sorcery, magic, and geomancy, and such like diabolical arts." The Brāhmaṇs of Gujarat were confirmed idolaters, and some of them (obviously Digambar Jains) went stark naked, declaring, "We have no sin of the flesh to be conscious of, and therefore we are not ashamed of our nakedness." Marco Polo also observed that "They would not kill an animal on any account, not even a fly, or a flea, or a louse, or anything in fact that has life; for they say these have all souls, and it would be sin to do so."

Ibn Battuta's account of the people is equally interesting and valuable. He found that, although the Hindus observed caste regulations strictly, they were very hospitable. The practice of hoarding wealth was common, and the Moor confirms Marco Polo's observation regarding the law of debt being peculiar. If a big Amir was in debt, the creditor would block his way to the palace and shout imploring the Sultan's aid. The debtor in his embarrassment would be either constrained to pay or make a definite promise. If necessary the Sultan interfered and enforced payment. Another peculiar custom noted by Ibn Battuta was *Marmakatāyam*, or the law of inheritance as it has always prevailed in Malabar, according to which a sister's son, instead of the heir of one's own body, legally inherits property. The penal code of Malabar was also Draconic inasmuch as theft,

even though it be that of a cocoanut, was punishable with death. He was surprised, on the other hand, to find that people on the west coast cared much for education. At Honāvar, for instance, the traveller found thirteen schools for girls and twenty-three for boys. He also noticed that Calicut was a flourishing emporium frequented by traders from all parts of the world.

We have already referred to Bengal being considered by the Muslims as 'hell crammed with good things'. Ibn Battuta speaks of it as a rich and fertile province. Prices were low, as in other parts of India, and even men with small incomes could live in ease and comfort. According to Mahuan, the shipping and foreign trade of Bengal was also flourishing. The province produced two crops of rice in a year, besides wheat, hemp, ginger, pulse, and vegetables in large quantities. Though most of the people were content with betel, and tea was not grown in the country, fermented drinks were prepared from rice and cocoanuts. Among the most noteworthy manufactures were white paper made from the bark of a tree, 'smooth and glossy like the skin of deer,' and silk fabrics embroidered with gold, 'painted ware, basins, cups, steel, guns, knives, and scissors.'

Wassāf similarly speaks of Gujarat as a rich and populous country, with 7000 towns and villages abounding in wealth. But, as we have remarked above, there was at times such acute misery among the masses that, when famine visited, some of them, unable to bear the pangs of hunger, drowned themselves in the rivers. Prices were, no doubt, extremely low, but the Hindus suffered from the systematic grinding to which most of their Muslim rulers subjected them. They had been reduced to being mere 'Hewers of wood and drawers of water' in their own land which was ordinarily 'flowing with milk and honey'. Under Fīrūz Tughlak the revenue of Delhi and its territories alone had risen to six *crores* and eighty-five *lacs* of *tankās* ; but it was money mostly extorted from the Hindus. They had little compensation in the State charities and public works which were primarily designed for the Faithful. It was under such circumstances that their distress was further exploited by zealous Sultans like Fīrūz, who sought to earn merit in Heaven by converting the helpless in large numbers.

'I encouraged my infidel subjects,' writes Fīrūz complacently in his autobiography, 'to embrace the religion of the Prophet, and I proclaimed that every one who repeated the creed and became a Musalmān should be exempt from the *jizya*

or poll-tax. Information of this came to the ears of the people at large, and great numbers of Hindus presented themselves, and were admitted to the honour of Islām. Thus they came forward day by day from every quarter, and adopting the Faith, were exonerated from the *jizya*, and were favoured with presents and honours.'

[The *jizya* was paid in three grades: (1) 40 *tankās*, (2) 20 *tankās*, and (3) 10 *tankās*. Under Fīrūz, the Brāhmaṇs had to pay 10 *tankās* and 50 *jitals*. According to Thomas, 64 *jitals* made one *tankā* in the fourteenth century. A *tankā* contained 175 grains of silver against 180 grains of the later rupee.]

B. Cultural Rapprochement

In reviewing the results of the Arab conquest of Sind we remarked that the foreigners, though victorious in arms, were themselves captivated by the culture of the vanquished, and also that the history of the Arabs in Sind was but the epitome of the history of Islam in India. Medieval Hindu India, despite her political weakness, was culturally so full of vitality that, to use the great Bengali saint Chaitanya's simile she was like the tree which gives shade even to him who cuts its boughs: 'Rain and storm and the burning rays of the sun it suffers, yet continues to give sweet-scented flowers and delicious fruits.' Or, in the words of E.B. Havell, "Islam seized her political capitals, controlled her military forces, and appropriated her revenues, but India retained what she cherished most, her intellectual empire, and her soul was never subdued." In the heroic spirit of that noble Rajput lady, the mother of Fīrūz Shāh, India, he says elsewhere, surrendered her body to the Muhammadan conqueror that from her womb a new Islam might be born. She, indeed, won back by spiritual weapons what she had lost on the battlefield. Captivating and fruitful as this aspect of our study is, we have here to content ourselves with a few illustrative facts revealing the cultural *rapprochement* that, though imperceptible at first, inevitably set in after the Muslims had made this country their permanent home. But the effects were reciprocal. As one recent writer has put it, "Not only did Hindu religion, Hindu art, Hindu literature, and Hindu science, absorb Muslim elements, but the very spirit of Hindu culture and the very stuff of Hindu mind were also altered, and the Muslim reciprocated by responding to the change in every department of life." (Dr. Tara Chand, *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture*, p. 137.)

It will be convenient to consider this mingling of the two streams of culture under two definite categories: (1) Art and Architecture; (2) Literature and Religion.

Art and Architecture:

Coinage: The only form of Art, apart from the decorative and architectural, which is of special interest in Muslim India is that connected with Numismatics. Of all the sources of information, of undoubted contemporaneous character, from which we are able to learn more than at first sight appears, the coins of the Muslim kings are extremely valuable. Their designs, calligraphy, mint-marks, and legends constitute a type of chronicles that yield ready information of an interesting nature. Minting coins was a royal prerogative that was jealously guarded by the Muslim monarchs, though the crudeness of their make often exposed them to the risk of counterfeiting. From the royal titles, the date and name of the place of minting, etc., we are enabled to determine, the extent of the Kingdom and even the character and status of the monarch. To cite only one example, the coins of Muhammad Tughlak were minted at Delhi, Daulatābad, and several other provincial capitals, and were of at least twenty-five different varieties. Among these were the token-coins of the Forced Currency. The dates of the currency experiment are ascertained from the data they supply. The legends include 'The warrior in the cause of God,' 'He who obeys the Sultan obeys the Compassionate,' and the substitution of the name of the Caliph of Cairo for that of the king, etc. Some of them also bear an inscription in Nāgarī as well. From the point of view of Islam's adjustment to the exigencies of the country it had conquered, the earliest coins are the most instructive. For example, the gold coins of Muhammad Ghūri, "struck in imitation of the Hindu kings of Kanauj with the goddess Lakshmī on the obverse, are, except for the earliest gold issue of Haidar Alī of Mysore, without a parallel in Muhammadan history." Coins known as the *Dehlīwāla* with the humped bull of Śiva and the sovereign's name in Nāgarī on the obverse, and the Delhi Chauhān type of horseman on the reverse, lasted till the reign of Alā-ud-dīn Musūd (1241-46 A.D.). On some of this class, Iltutmish's name is associated with that of Chāhada-deva of Narwar. A unique specimen bears the names of Muhammad bin Sām and Prithvirāja on the obverse and reverse respectively.

Architecture: Just as in the early coins Hindu and Muslim traditions mingled, so did their architectural styles combine to produce the so-called Indo-Saracenic type. We have noted how the Arabs were poor builders and had to adapt foreign models to their requirements. But the Turks seemed to possess a genius for architecture. Fergusson

has observed, "Nothing could be more brilliant, and at the same time more characteristic, than the commencement of the architectural career of these Pathans in India...A nation of soldiers equipped for conquest and that only, they of course brought with them neither artists nor architects, but, like all nations of Turanian origin, they had strong architectural instincts, and, having a style of their own, they could hardly go wrong in any architectural project they might attempt. At the same time, they found among their new subjects an infinite number of artists quite capable of carrying out any designs that might be propounded to them." Already in the course of our political narrative we have alluded to the building achievements of the various Sultans, from Kutb-ud-dīn Aibak to Fīrūz Tughlak at Delhi, and also those of the other provinces like Bengal, Jaunpur, Mālwa, Gujarat, Khāndesh and the Bahmani kingdom. Even a brief architectural survey of the Muslim kingdoms would make very interesting reading, but, for want of space, we must confine ourselves here to a few examples only, particularly those revealing a synthesis of the Hindu and the Muslim styles. Such a survey, however brief, will bear "eloquent testimony to the enduring vitality of Hindu art under an alien rule and to the wonderful capacity of the Muslim for absorbing that art into his own and endowing it with a new and grander spirit."

In spite of the barbarities they perpetrated the Muslim conquerors were no mere barbarians. Even Mahmūd Ghazni, who ruthlessly destroyed the magnificent temples of Mathura and Brindāvan, stopped for a while in sheer admiration before he struck his blow in the cause of Religion. After all, "*It's the cause,*" and, however fascinating Desdemona might be, Othello must not stay his hand. From the Idol-breaker to Timūr Lane the conquerors were careful to spare the far-famed Hindu artisans and took them to Ghazni and Samarkand to build for the Muslims. The Turks had "instinct rather than training," and, in India, they gave full vent to the "inborn artistry" of their nature with the help of the matchless workers of Hindustan. The strong antithesis that existed between the requirements of the Muslim masters and the artistic conventions of the Indian employees, far from proving an obstacle, served rather to enrich the architectonics of both. "The monotheistic puritanism of Islam delighted in the simplicity of of the unbroken dome, the plain symbolism of the pointed arch and the slenderness of the minaret......Hindu polytheism, on the other hand, invited to variety and complexity of form and the decoration of every part with deep bas-relief and the human figure...The conquerors

could not fail to be influenced by the arts which had flourished around them. Hindu ornament began to invade the simple Islamic forms......The plain severity of the dome submitted to the imposition of the *kalasha,* or ornate lotus-cresting, and its metal finial gave place to an elaborate carving in stone. Moreover the Muhammadans learned from the Hindus lessons in the proportionate massing of buildings and the disposition of their parts. Lack of symmetry was remedied; and in the tombs of Isa Khan and Humayun, we find a splendid synthesis of Muslim ideals and Hindu methods of treatment." No better summary could be given, of the main features of the *rapprochement* between the two peoples in the realm of architecture, than this succinct statement of Sir Henry Sharp. (*Delhi, Its Story and Buildings*, pp. 20-21.)

The evolution of the Indo-Muslim style, which began with the Minar and Mosque of Kutb-ud-dīn at Delhi and culminated in the exquisite edifices of Agra and Fathpur Sikri, is described by Sharp in four distinct stages: (1) In the first stage were erected the buildings of Old Delhi under the Slaves and Khaljīs; (2) in the second stage the Tughlaks built the extensions of Tughlakābad and Hisar-Fīrūza; (3) in the third stage came the constructions of the Saiyids and the Lodis; and (4) in the fourth stage arose the magnificent creations of the Mughals. Five out of the seven cities of Delhi, excluding the modern, belonged to the period before Bābur, and most of the provincial cities were but replicas of the imperial capital. Hence, Sir Henry's observation that "The buildings of Delhi furnish a striking epitome of the history both of the city itself and of Hindustan" is quite justified.

In the pre-Tughlak architecture, "Not merely do the high Muhammadan arches contrast with the low, richly-carved Hindu colonnades, but the workmanship of those arches themselves and of the great minar show unmistakable Hindu characteristics applied to Muhammadan design. These monuments are the expression of a victorious, imaginative and semi-barbaric race carried out by the quiet, painstaking experience of their more civilized subjects." The orthodox Tughlaks, especially Ghiyās-ud-dīn and Fīrūz, sedulously tried to eschew Hindu influence, and produced at their best a stern and gloomy architecture, puritanically pure. But soon after Timūr's invasions, we find in the Makhdum Sabzawari "a fitting link with the style of the Sayyid and Lodi dynasties. The Hindu features of the gate, the external dripstone on the mosque, and the plaster

decoration on the interior of the dome of the tomb, bespeak the passing of the puritan period of art at Delhi."

In the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, although politically "the empire was practically in abeyance," there was developed at Delhi a style in architecture which according to Fergusson, formed "the last expiring effort of the Pathans, or the first dawn of that of the great Mughals, and it is well worthy of either." Sharp adds, "Inglorious as the period was, it furnishes a fine series of architectural efforts, and, while linked with the Tughlaq style by the restrained sedateness of most of its effects, exhibits a new synthesis with Hindu forms and paves the way to the larger splendours of the Mughals."

In the provinces the local influences are seen at their best in Gujarat, Bengal, and Kashmir, while Jaunpur, Mālwa, and the Deccan either imported a foreign style, like the Persian at Bidar (*e. g.*, the *Madrasa* of M. Gāwān), or merely copied the Islamic architecture of Delhi, as at Māndu, though not unmixed with Hindu touches of grace and strength and beauty. Though we may not fully agree with Havell when he says, "This new Islamic culture, which began when Mahmūd of Ghazni made the royal craftsmen of Mathurā and Kanauj build for him the mosque of 'the Celestial Bride', *is in everything but name a Hindu Renaissance*," still there is much truth in his observation that Ahmedābad, the capital of Muhammadan Gujarat, was created by the royal craftsmen of Rajputāna; the Gaur of the Mussalman Sultans was a new Lakhnauti; Benares was the mother of Jaunpur; Dhār the mother of Māndu; the royal craftsmen of the Vijayanagara Rājas built the capital of the Muhammadan dynasty of Bijāpur.

Literature and Religion:

"Seldom in the history of mankind," says Sir John Marshall, "has the spectacle been witnessed of two civilisations, so vast and so strongly developed, yet so radically dissimilar as the Muhammadan and Hindu, meeting and mingling together. The very contrasts which existed between them, the wide divergences in their culture and their religions, make the history of their impact peculiarly instructive." We have noticed above the results of this impact in the coinage and architecture of Muslim India. A survey of the literature and religion of the period will further corroborate the impressions already formed.

Literature: Readers will recollect what was said earlier about the Arab conquest of Sind. The cultural treasures that the Arabs took away from India were, indeed, the richest booty they got. The

Brahma Siddhānta and *Khanda-Khādyaka* were not to be the only Sanskrit works translated by the Muslims. It was significant that Mahmūd Ghazni was accompanied by Al-Biruni, an accomplished Sanskrit scholar, whose passion for dispassionate learning, wherever it could be had, was as consuming as that of his master for material wealth. Even the fanatical Fīrūz Tughlak found interest in securing a rare Sanskrit manuscript during the sack of Nagarkot, and getting it translated into Persian and calling the new work *Dalaya-l-Fīrūz Shāhi*. Similar interest in native literature was evinced by other Muslim rulers whose outlook was frankly wider than that of Fīrūz. Among these, Husain Shāh of Bengal and Zain-ul-Ābidīn have already been mentioned. On their side, the most valuable contribution to Indian literature that the Muslims made was in the shape of historical chronicles like the *Tarikh-i-Fīrūz Shāhi* from which we have largely quoted. Al-Biruni had rightly found the Hindus deficient in historical sense, though after him they produced works like *Rājatarangiṇī* and the *Chānd Rāisa*. But for the writings of chroniclers like Baranī, Afif and Yahya, our knowledge of medieval Indian would have been poor indeed.

When the Muslim invaders made India their home, married Hindu wives, lived, moved, and had their being in the midst of Hindusfanis, a *modus vivendi* was bound to be discovered which would be inevitably a compromise between the best and the worst on either side. In dress, speech, manners, customs, and intellectual outlook, the two influenced each other very profoundly, as is evidenced by the religious and literary movements of the age. In a sense these two movements were interdependent and inextricably connected together, for when a people are stirred to their depths they burst into creative expression of which the literary medium is the most facile and general. It was such an *elan vital* that produced the religious movements of medieval India and our vernacular literature. A brief notice of the rise of these, strictly from the point of view of the cultural coming together of the Hindus and Muslims, should be a fitting close to our study of the age.

Zabān-i-Urdu or the language of the army was one of the first fruits of the contact between the Persian, Arabic, or Turki speaking foreigners and the Hindi speaking Indians. Though it took a long time for this dialect to develop into a literary medium, it was in its spoken form largely used by the Muslims to impart their religion to the natives. "It is an astonishing fact," says Bailey, "that literary composition in

Urdu was going on in the Deccan for hundreds of years before it really began in north India." The reason he assigns for this is extremely interesting for the student of Muslim history in that part of the country. We have already noted the division of the Deccani Musalmans into Foreigners and Natives. Especially after the rise of the Bahmani Kingdom the native Muslims of the south wished to be as separate as possible from the imperial capital in the north and "they developed a local patriotism with a desire to emphasise their own life and modes of thought; and lastly they began to suspect and dislike outsiders. This resulted in a cultivation of Urdu, as opposed to Persian which was the language of the Emperor's Court." This new dialect in the south was known as *Dakhni* and was considerably influenced by Gujarāti and Marāthi. In the middle of the fourteenth century there was no real difference between Delhi *Urdu* and *Dakhni*, but after the separation of the Bahmani Kingdom the two dialects began to diverge. Shāh Mirān, one of the Muslim saints of Bijapur (d. 1496 A.D.) preached and wrote in Urdu, because, he says in a striking passage of his *Shahādat-ul-Haqiqat*, it was a language which all could understand.

Hindi literature is older, and much more interesting for our present subject. Its provincial variations and linguistic aspects need not be dwelt upon here. Chānd Bardāi, Prithvirāja's court-poet, was the earliest writer of note in the language. He got killed together with his master in 1192 A.D. after Tarāin. In his *Prithi Rāj Rāso* occur the following beautiful lines regarding Padmāvati or Sanjogata:

> Arrayed with the tokens of the King of Love,
> Filling a golden tray with pearls,
> Lighting a lamp she waved it round;
> Taking her confidant with her, boldly the maiden
> Goes, as Rukmini went to meet Murāri.

Sārang Dhar was another bard who has sung of Rāja Hammir of Rantambhor, but for the literature of Hindu revival we must turn to the poet saints of the *Bhakti* school.

Religion: Even here we must confine ourselves rigidly to some of the profound effects the two religions produced upon each other. Caste, idolatry and esoteric obscurantism were the three baneful aspects of Hinduism that had been ruthlessly attacked by the protagonists of Islam, which was itself a non-idolatrous, simple and democratic creed that observed no distinctions of caste or race. The Hindu religious revival in the fifteenth century was, therefore, marked by

attempts at reform in these very directions. Firstly, Rāmānuja in the south (12th century) Nāmadev in the Deccan, Mira Bai in Rajputāna, Rāmānand, Kabir and Rai Dās at Benares, Chaitanya in Bengal, and Nānak in the Punjab (all in the 15th century), by preaching and practice, denounced the Brāhmanical caste exclusiveness; secondly, though some of them inculcated *bhakti* in which idols found an important place, they emphasised the unity of God and the true spirit of religion as distinguished from mere idolatry: and thirdly, they appealed to the hearts of the people by singing to them mostly in the language of the masses, as against the esoteric Sanskrit of the Brāhmanical school. Rāmānuja, Rāmānand, and Chaitanya were Brāhmans, Nāmadev was a tailor, Mira Bai a Rajputni, Kabir a Muslim weaver, Rai Dās a cobbler, and Nānak a Khatri. These were not all. They came from all castes and all provinces and preached against caste. The keynote of their teaching may be found in the following lines from Kabir:

> If God be within the mosque, then to whom does this world belong?
>
> If Rām be within the image, then who is there to know what happens without?
>
> Hari is in the East; Allāh is in the West. Look within your own heart, for there you will find both Karim and Rām.
>
> All the men and women of the world are His living forms.
>
> Kabir is the child of Allāh and Rām; He is my Gurū; He is my Pīr.
>
> Vain too are the distinctions of caste.
>
> All shades of colour are but broken arcs of light.
>
> All varieties in human nature are but fragments of Humanity.
>
> The right to approach God is not the monopoly of Brāhmans, but belongs to all who are sincere of heart.

A perusal of the religious writings of the age will show that Kabir was not a solitary idealist but that he had his fore-runners and followers in all parts of the country. One or two more citations may not be out of place: Nānak preached like Kabir to Hindus and Muslims alike and said:

> Hadst thou the eighteen *Purāṇas* with thee,
> Couldst thou recite the four *Vedas*,
> Didst thou bathe on holy days and give alms according to man's castes,
> Didst thou fast and perform religious ceremonies day and night,
> Wast thou a *Kāzi*, a *Mulla*, or a Sheikh,
> A *Jogi*, a *jangam*, didst thou wear an ochre-coloured dress,
> Or didst thou perform the duties of a householder—
> Without knowing God, Death would bind and take all men away.

"I belong not to any of the four castes," he declared, "Nānak is with those who are low-born among the lowly." And to the Musalmans his advice was

> Make kindness thy mosque, sincerity thy prayer-carpet, what is just and lawful thy Korān,
> Modesty thy circumcision, civility thy fasting, so shalt thou be a Musalman.
> Make right conduct thy *Ka'bah,* truth thy spiritual guide, good works thy creed and thy prayer,
> The will of God thy rosary, and God will preserve thine honour, says Nānak.

That these reformist sentiments were not confined to provinces where Muslims abounded is also proved by similar echoes being heard in the farthest corner of South India, where the Siddhars taught:

> No Image made
> Of stone or wood, no *linga* stump
> Built of earth and made by hand
> Could ever seem divine to one
> Who knew he came from God.
> How many flowers I gave
> At famous temple shrines!
> How many *mantras* said!
> Oft washed the idol's head!
> And still with weary feet
> Encircled Śiva's shrines!
> But now at last I know
> Where dwells the King of Gods,
> And never will salute
> A temple made with hands.

Another preacher of the same school addressing the Brāhman asks in all conscience—

> O Brāhmaṇs, list to me
> And answer if you can!
> Do rain and wind avoid
> Some men among the rest
> Because their caste is low?
> When such men tread the earth,
> Hast seen it quake with rage?
> Or does the brilliant sun
> Refuse to them its rays?
> When shall our race be one great brotherhood
> Unbroken by the tyranny of caste?

And with the conviction of sincere faith assures—

> O Brāhmaṇs list to me!
> In all this blessed land
> There is but one great caste,

One tribe and brotherhood.
One God doth dwell above
And he hath made us one
In birth and frame and tongue.

It is not difficult to find in all these utterances the far-reaching influences of monotheistic Islam. "Islam with its clear, definite, and simple creed, which stood in contrast to the indigenous vagaries of the imagination and speculation about God," Mr. Titus observes in his *Indian Islam*, "appealed to many Hindus as a satisfying solution to the vexed problem of theology. To others its social democracy granted welcome release from the bondage of caste. But when all is said there seems to be little doubt that Hinduism has wrought a far greater change in Islam than Islam has wrought in Hinduism, which still continues to pursue the even tenor of its way with a complacency and confidence that are amazing." How true this remark is will become more apparent when we shall have reviewed the history of the next and the greatest and the last Empire of the Crescent in India. The Turks did their worst on Hindu society and failed: the Mughals were to attempt their best and yet never succeed.

SOME RELEVANT DATES

A.D.	
1384	Death of Wycliffe.
1400-70	Rāmānand. Death of Chaucer.
1440-1518	Kabir.
1452-1519	Leonardo da Vinci.
1469-1539	Nānak.
1470	Mira Bai born.
1473	Copernicus born.
1484	Bābur born.
1485	Chaitanya born. Henry Tudor's victory at Bosworth.
1486	Bahlol Lodi's son Barbak enthroned at Jaunpur. Mān Singh Parihār's accession at Gwalior.
1489	Accession of Sikander Lodi; of Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd in Bengal; of Fath Shāh in Kashmir.
1490	Usurpation of Sidi Badr, Muzāffar Shāh, in Bengal.
1494	Husain Shāh of Jaunpur expelled by Sikander Lodi.
1497	Restoration of Muhammad Shāh in Kashmir.
1498	Restoration of Fath Shāh in Kashmir.
1500	Accession of Nāsir-ud-dīn in Mālwa.
1502	Accession of Mahmūd in Multan.
1503	Nāsir-ud-dīn of Mālwa invades Rajputāna.
1504	Bābur becomes king of Kabul; raids Indian frontier. Yusuf Adil Shāh expelled from Bijapur for trying to impose Shiah religion.

1505 Sikander Lodi's campaign in Gwalior.
1506 The Portuguese at Cochin.
1507 Bābur assumes title of Pādshāh at Kabul.
1509 Accession of Rāṇa Sanga and Krishnadeva Rāya.
1510 Accession of Ismail Adil Shāh. The Portuguese capture Goa. Krishnadeva Rāya annexes Raichur Doab.
1511 Death of Mahmūd Bégarha; accession of Muzāffar Shāh II in Gujarat; of Mahmūd II in Mālwa.
1512 Rajput domination and Muslim revolt in Mālwa.
1513 Sikander Lodi sends expedition to Mālwa.
1514 Mamūd II submits to Rajputs at Māndu. War among the Deccan Kingdoms.
1516 Rape of 140 Virgins by Muslims in Rajputāna.
1517 Accession of Ibrāhim Lodi; rebellion of Jalāl Khān.
1518 Accession of Nāsir-ud-dīn Nusrat Shāh in Bengal; Muzāffar II of Gujarat massacres Rajputs and restores Mahmūd II to Mālwa; Ibrāhim Lodi captures Gwalior.
1519 Rāṇa Sanga defeats and captures Mahmūd II of Mālwa at Gāgraun; Bābur's first two expeditions into India (Bhira).
1520 Bābur's third expedition into India (Sialkot).
1521 Muzāffar II of Gujarat and Mahmūd II of Mālwa invade Rāṇa Sanga's territory (siege of Mandasor). Luther at Diet of Worms; Ignatius Loyola wounded at Pampeluna.
1522 Final capture of Kandahār by Bābur; Shāh Beg Arghūn established in Sind.
1524 Bābur's fourth and fifth expeditions into India at Daulat Khān Lodi's invitation (Lahore and Dipālpur captured); Shāh Beg Arghūn succeeded by Shāh Husain in Sind.
1525 Deposition of Walī-ullāh and accession of Kaleem-ullāh last of the Bahmanis; war between Deccani kingdoms.
1526 Bābur's victory at Pānipat over Ibrāhim Lodi; deposition of Muhmmad Shāh and accession of Ibrāhim I in Kashmir; death of Muzāffar II of Gujarat, accession and assassination of Sikander, and accession of Bahādur Shāh I.
1527 Extinction of Bahmanis; Nāzūk Shāh's accession in Kashmir.
1528 The Portuguese reach Bengal.

CHAPTER IX

THIRD EMPIRE OF THE CRESCENT : MUGHAL

What we described as the First and Second Empires of the Crescent, in previous chapters, really constituted one single effort at Imperial rule made by the Turks. Even that proved abortive, as the Empire of the Khaljīs and Tughlaks together did not last longer than a bare quarter century (1311-35 A.D.). A more real attempt in the same direction was made by the Mughals in the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The Mughal Empire in India was founded in 1526 by Zahir-ud-dīn Muhammad Bābur, who, according to all estimates, is one of the most fascinating personalities in all history. He spent the greater part of his life outside India, and though, as Lane-Poole says, his permanent place in history rests upon his Indian conquests, his earlier life (of which he has left an imperishable record in his *Memoirs*) constitutes an interest no less absorbing. 'Given such a man it would be sheer perversity to treat him solely in reference to the part he played in India, as this would be to deprive ourselves of no less than thirty-six years of the very best of company.'

Bābur's Antecedents :

Bābur was born in February 1483 and his *Memoirs* begin with the sentence—'In the month of Ramzān of the year 899 (Hegira), in the twelfth year of my age, I became ruler in the country of Farghāna.' He was descended, through his father Umar Sheikh, from Timūr, and through his mother Kutlug Nigar, from Chingiz Khān. Thus he combined in himself ' the ferocity of the Mongol, and the courage and capacity of the Turk.' To these inherited traits, Bābur also added the polished urbanity of his Persian nurture.

Farghāna, with Andijan as its capital, was Umar Sheikh's kingdom. It was a fertile tract of country on the Jagzartes, 50,000 sq. miles in extent (now Khokand in Russian Turkistan). But Bābur's father was not satisfied with this. So he quarrelled with his eldest brother, Ahmad Mirza, who had received the largest share of the paternal dominions, viz., Sāmarkand and Bokhāra. In the midst of these quarrels, however, Umar Sheikh died of an accidental fall, while

feeding his pigeons (8 June 1494). This fatal event synchronised with the invasion of Farghāna by Bābur's paternal and maternal uncles, Ahmad and Mahmūd Mirza, respectively. Though Bābur was hardly twelve years of age at that time, he was saved from the critical situation by the loyalty of his subjects. He gratefully records : 'They (i.e. his enemies) found in our soldiers and peasantry a resolution and single-mindedness such as would not let them flinch from making offering of their lives so long as there was breath and power in their bodies.'

Sāmarkand, the city of Timūr, (then ruled by his uncle Ahmad Mirza) exercised the greatest fascination over the ambitious son of Umar Sheikh. It was to the west of Farghāna, a city five miles in circuit, noted for its learning, and possessed of a great astronomical observatory (built by Ulugh Beg), and had celebrated colleges, baths and mosques. According to Bābur, 'even the baker's shops (of Sāmarkand) are excellent and the cooks are skilful.' In July 1494, when Ahmad Mirza died, Bābur set his heart upon the conquest of Sāmarkand, though he could not make his first effort until July 1496, and even then not successfully. But this attempt marked an important stage in Bābur's life. Next year (1497), though only for a while, Bābur succeeded in his ambition. He captured Sāmarkand and kept it for a hundred days. Then there was rebellion in Farghāna which cost him both the kingdoms : 'Thus for the sake of Farghāna I had given up Sāmarkand, and now found I had lost the one without securing the other'.

After this Bābur became a wanderer for two years. As he himself put it, ever since he was eleven years of age, he 'never spent two festivals of the Ramzān, in the same place'; or, in the words of Ferishta, 'the football of fortune, like a king on a chess-board, he moved about from place to place buffeted about like a pebble on the sea-shore.' But wherever he went, Bābur was always cheerful, always kindly, always ready to enjoy the beauties of nature,—especially 'a wonderful, delicate, and toothsome melon with a mottled skin like shagreen'. In 1498 he won Farghāna back, though he had to lose it again in 1500, because of an attempt to restrain his greedy 'Mughal rascals' from plundering. 'It was a senseless thing,' he writes, 'to exasperate so many men with arms in their hands. *In war and in state-craft a thing may seem reasonable at first sight, but it needs to be weighed and considered in a hundred lights before it is finally decided upon.* This ill-judged order of mine was, in fact, the ultimate cause of my

second expulsion'. Once more, therefore, he had to seek refuge 'by dangerous tracks among rocks. In the steep and narrow ways and gorges which we had to climb, many a horse and camel dropped and fell out......We passed on, nevertheless, with incredible labour, through fearful gorges and tremendous precipices, until after a hundred agonies and losses, at last we topped those murderous steep defiles and came down on the borders of Kān, with its lovely expanse of lake'.

During 1500-1 he captured Sāmarkand for a second time, married his cousin Āyesha, had by her a daughter, 'who in a month or forty days went to partake of the mercy of God.' After this they parted : for, 'as my affections decreased, my shyness increased.' Soon, Bābur was defeated by Shaibāni, the Uzbeg leader at Sar-i-pūl (Bridge Head), and again driven out of Sāmarkand within eight months. From 1502-4 he was once more a fugitive, with a following of only 'more than 200 and less than 300 men with clubs in their hands and tattered clothes on their backs.' In a garden he was once awaiting death, 'but soon found life and fortune.' The kingly blood in him carved out a kingdom at Kabul, in 1504.

'It was in the last ten days of the second Rabi (October 1504) that without a fight, without an effort, by Almighty God's bounty and mercy, I obtained and made subject to me Kabul and Ghazni and their dependent districts.' Here Bābur assumed, in 1507, the title of *Pādshāh* or Emperor, which had never been borne by any Timūrid before him : 'Up to that date people had styled Timūr Beg's descendants *Mirza* even when they were ruling ; now I ordered that people should style me *Pādshāh*.' The same year (1507) Bābur conquered Kandahār and bestowed it upon his younger brother Nāsir, who, however, soon lost it within a week. It was not reconquered finally until fifteen years later.

Bābur still yearned for Sāmarkand. This year (1507), also, he paid a visit to his cousins in Herat which was 'the home of culture and ease.' 'In the whole habitable world,' writes Bābur, 'there is not such another city'. But his object in going there was to see if he could secure their help in making yet another effort against Shaibāni. But he soon realised that 'the brave barbarian from the north' was not to be vanquished by men like these. The Mirzas, although accomplished and having a charming talent for conversation and society, 'possessed no knowledge whatever of the conduct of a campaign or of warlike operations, and were perfect strangers to the preparations for a battle, and the dangers and spirit of a soldier's life.'

On his way back, Bābur met with 'such suffering and hardships as I had scarcely endured at any other time of my life.' Nevertheless, in 1511-12, he had the satisfaction of winning Sāmarkand, Bokhāra and Khurāsan, for the last time, with the help of Shāh Ismael Safavi of Persia. In October 1511, Bābur re-entered Sāmarkand 'in the midst of such pomp and splendour as no one has ever seen or heard of before or ever since.' Bābur's dominions now reached their widest extent : from Tāshkhend and Sairām on the borders of the deserts of Tartary, to Kabul and Ghazni near the Indian frontier, including Sāmarkand, Bokhāra, Hisar, Kunduz and Farghāna. But this glory was as shortlived as it was great. After flying from one part of his dominions to another, losing everywhere, he returned to Kābul in 1513-14.

The Shāh exacted from him a very heavy price : Bābur was to hold those kingdoms under the Shāh ; he was also to become a convert to the *Shiah* faith and adopt all its symbols, as well as enforce the *Shiah* creed on the orthodox *Sunni* subjects of the conquered kingdom. Though Bābur refused to persecute anybody for his religious faith, his own conversion led to his fall. *With this last discomfiture in the north and west, the first period of Bābur's life comes to a close* ; *after this he definitely turned to the south and east, viz., India.* Although he continued to sit on the throne of Kabul for another twelve years, the history of the period 1514–25 is of little interest to the student of Indian History, except in its bearing on Bābur's Indian expeditions, to which we must now turn. 'Kabul,' writes Bābur, 'is the intermediate point between Hindustan and Khurāsan'. "Bābur", as Lane-Poole has said, "is the link between Central Asia and India, between predatory hordes and imperial government, between Tarmerlane and Akbar."

Towards Hindustan :

'The great advantage of Hindustan,' Bābur was aware, 'besides its vast extent of territory, is the amount of gold, coined and uncoined, which may be found there'. To Hindustan, therefore, he turned his wistful eyes when, after the conquest of Kābul, he felt the need for supplies. (1) In 1504, he marched along the Peshāwar-Attok road, went through the Khyber, and then instead of crossing the river Indus, marched on Kohat. Here he found much booty which he seized. (2) In September, 1507, he resolved, after some discussion, to march

in the direction of Hindustan. So, placing a cousin in charge of Kabul, he came as far as Adināpur (now Jalālābad), fighting his way among the Afghans and vainly attempting to subdue those 'robbers and plunderers even in time of peace.' The retreat of Shaibāni emboldened Bābur to return to his capital; and once more the advance into India was postponed. (3) Some time between 1514 and 1519 Bābur profiting by the example of Shāh Ismael, determined to possess an effective artillery and secured the services of an Ottoman Turk named Ustād Āli, who became his Master of Ordnance. Between 1520 and 1525, likewise, he secured another Turkish expert named Mustafa, for the same purpose. These were clear indications of Bābur's effective preparations for the intended conquest of India. "If there was one single material factor, which more than any other conduced to his ultimate triumph in Hindustan," writes Mr. Rushbrook-Williams, "it was his powerful artillery." (4) Bābur, again, in 1518, attempted reduction of the tribes and fortresses on the north-east of Kabul, as a preliminary to the conquest of Hindustan.

Five Expeditions:

The urge for definite conquest, however, came to him from one of his nobles who said, 'Go on then and possess yourself of the noblest country in the universe. Establish beyond the river Indus the Empire which your fathers have marked out for you. Go and fix your Court in the centre of Hindustan and prefer the delights of the Indies to the hoar and snow of Tartary. Everything seems to invite you to the south. Providence has conducted you to Kabul and put you on the road to Hindustan. God and Muhammad engage you to extinguish the idolatry of the Indians'. The effect of this on Bābur is best summed up in what he himself wrote after the battle of Pānipat :—

'From the year 910 Hijra, when I obtained the principality of Kabul, up to the date of the events I now record, I had never ceased to think of the conquest of Hindustan. But I had never found a suitable opportunity for undertaking it, hindered as I was, sometimes by the apprehensions of my *Begs*, sometimes by disagreements between my brothers and myself. Finally, all these obstacles were happily removed. Great and small, *Begs* and captains, no one dared say a word against the project. So, in 925 Hijra (1519 A.D.) I left at the head of an army, and made a start by taking Bajaur........From this time to 932 Hijra (1526 A.D.) I was always actively concerned in the affairs of Hindustan. I went there in person, at the head of an army, five times in the course of seven or eight years. The fifth time, by the munificence and liberality of God, there fell beneath my blows an enemy as formidable as Sultan Ibrāhim and I gained the vast Empire of Hindustan'.

First Expedition : In 1519 he stormed Bajaur which fell after a spirited struggle in which Bābur's new artillery played a decisive part. 'By the favour and pleasure of the High God, this strong and mighty fort was taken in two or three hours; matching the fort were the utter struggle and effort of our braves ; distinguish themselves they did, and won the name and fame of heroes'. Bābur looked upon this as the first step on the road to Hindustan. If here he indulged in wholesale massacre, it was only to make an example. When he proceeded further to Bhīra, on the Jhelum, he acted with great restraint: 'As it was always in my heart to possess Hindustan, and as these several countries had once been held by the Turks, I pictured them as my own, and was resolved to get them into my own hands, whether peacefully or by force. For these reasons, it being imperative to treat the hill-men well, this order was given: *Do no hurt or harm to the flocks and herds of these people, nor even to their cotton-ends and broken needles.*'

He then despatched Mullah Murshid to Sultan Ibrāhim 'giving him the name and style of ambassador, to demand that the countries which from old times had belonged to the Turks should be given up to me.' The Mullah was also given letters for Daulat Khān, governor of the Punjab. But the people of Hindustan, and particularly the Afghans, writes Bābur, 'are a strangely foolish and senseless race.' Mullah Murshid was detained some time in Lahore, so that 'my envoy, five months after, returned to Kabul without having received any answer.' Bābur quitted India, leaving Bhīra in the charge of Hindu Beg, but the latter was soon expelled by the natives.

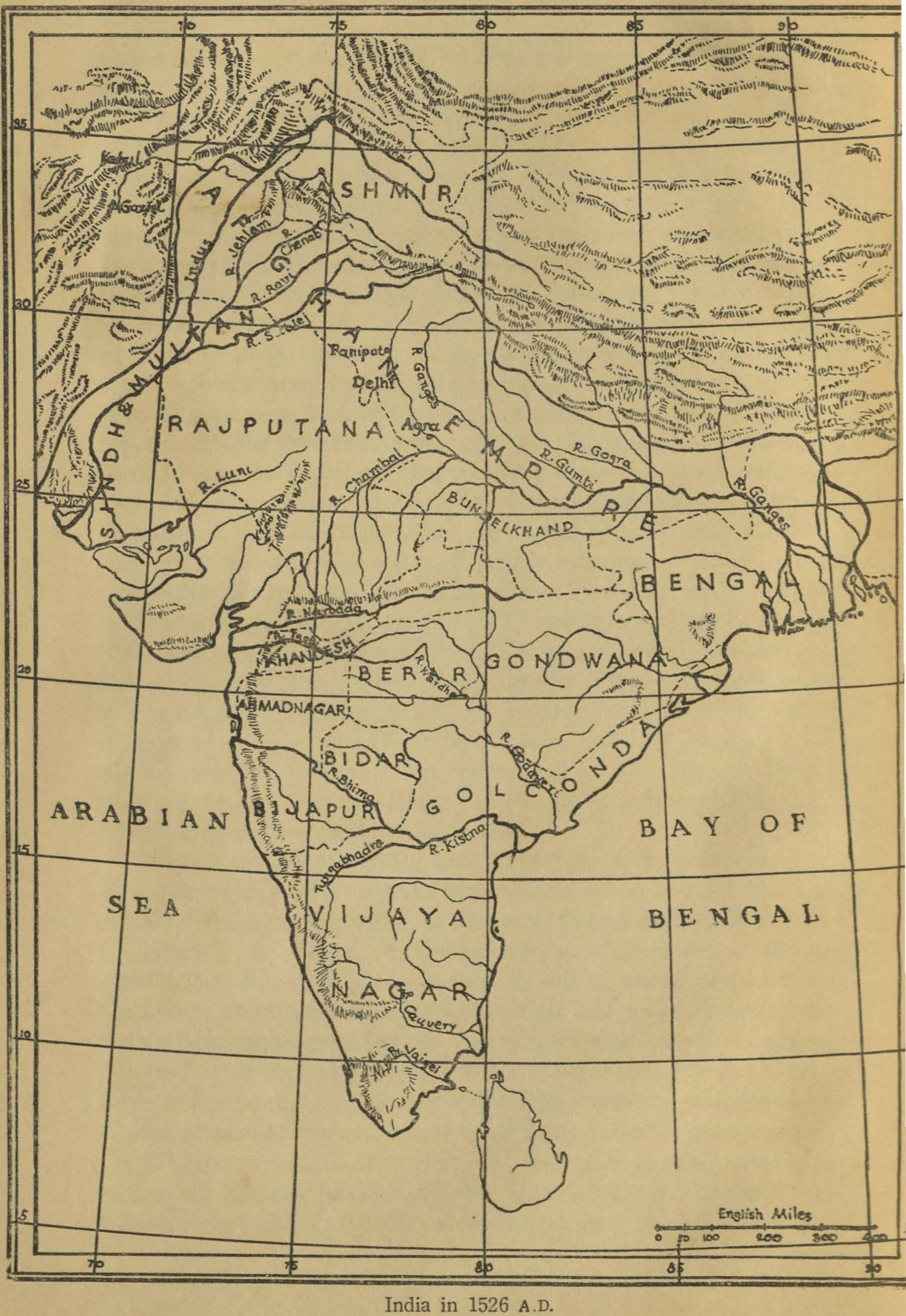
Second Expedition: The same year, in September 1519, Bābur again marched through the Khyber, in order to subdue the Yusufzai and provision Peshāwar fort as a base for future operations in Hindustan. But he was recalled by disturbing news from Badakhshān, which came into Bābur's possession in 1520.

Third Expedition : For the third time Bābur marched, in 1520, through Bajaur towards Bhīra. Subduing the recalcitrant Afghan tribes on the way, he proceeded to Sialkot, which submitted without striking a blow. The people of Saiyidpūr defied Bābur, but were easily subdued. However, Bābur had to hastily retrace his steps again to fight Shāh Beg Arghūn, ruler of Kandahār. After two unsuccessful efforts, Bābur finally acquired Kandahār, in 1522, through the treachery of its governor, Maulāna Abdul Bāgi. Shāh Beg estab-

lished himself in Sind, and Kāmrān (Bābur's second son) was put in charge of Kandahār.

Fourth Expedition: Thus, thoroughly secure at home, Bābur for the fourth time invaded India, in 1524. Daulat Khān, governor of the Punjab, was growing very powerful. Sultan Ibrāhim had summoned him to Delhi. But Daulat Khān offended him by not appearing in person. To protect himself from the Sultan's wrath, Daulat Khān sent his son Dilāwar Khān, to invite Bābur to dethrone Ibrāhim Lodi in favour of his uncle Ālam Khān (or Alā-ud-dīn). Bābur readily fell in with this invitation, and marched once more into the valleys of the Jhelum and the Chenab. Lahore and Dipālpur soon fell into his hands. Daulat Khān was defeated by the Delhi forces and driven into exile. But he came back and sought reinstatement at the hands of the invader. Bābur, however, offered him only Jalandhar and Sultānpur instead. Daulat Khān felt disappointed, and the fiefs were bestowed upon his more reliable son Dilāwar Khān. Dipālpur was given to Ālam Khān. Daulat Khān and his second son, Ghāzī Khān, fled to the hills, only to return in the wake of Bābur's withdrawal. They recaptured Sultānpur from Dilāwar, and Dipālpur from Ālam Khān. Ibrāhim's attempt to subdue Daulat Khān proved unsuccessful. But Bābur's Lahore detachment inflicted a defeat upon him. On account of this unsettled state, Ālam Khān fled to Kabul and once again sought Bābur's aid to seat himself on the throne of Delhi. In return Bābur was promised sovereignty over Lahore and west Punjab. Ālam Khān returned to India with this understanding. But the wily Daulat won him over. The two Khāns accordingly marched on Delhi, only to be disgracefully routed by the Sultan.

Fifth Expedition: Bābur now crossed the frontier for the last time (November 1525), with the largest army he had ever led into Hindustan. Humāyun was with him with a contingent from Badakhshān. On crossing the Jhelum, the Lahore army also joined him. All told, his following numbered not more than 12,000, of whom perhaps only 8,000 were effectives. Sialkot had been lost and the generals in India had gathered together at Lahore. But Daulat Khān alone had taken the field with not less than 40,000 men. Ibrāhim Lodi was soon to confront him with 1,00,000 men and a large number of war-elephants. However, Daulat Khān's forces melted away at Bābur's mere approach. On 26 February 1526, Humāyun won his spurs for the first time against an advance division of the Imperial forces. Ibrāhim was coming from Delhi, and Bābur from Sirhind and Ambāla. On 1st



India in 1526 A.D.

April, again, Babur's men encountered a cavalry division of the Sultan and crushed it. From 12 to 19 April, one whole week, the two armies faced each other, with little action, near Pānipat—'the plain intended by Nature to be the battlefield of nations.'

First Battle of Pānipat:

The battle was fought on 21 April 1526. "On one side were the courage of despair, and something of the resources of scientific warfare; on the other side, men-at-arms of the medieval type, with crowded ranks of spear-men and archers thronging on in fool-hardy disorder." On 19 April, a night attack by Bābur's men failed, and following this there was a scare among Bābur's men. The Imperial army, emboldened by the unimpressive conduct of the enemy, forged ahead. Owing to its large numbers, it had to converge suddenly: the wide front collapsed in confusion in re-adjusting itself before Bābur's narrower entrenched position. A keen master of strategy, Bābur at once had recourse to his traditional tactics of *Tulghma* and simultaneous artillery action. The Mughals surrounded the Indians on all sides and attacked, routed and slaughtered. Seldom was a day 'so fought, so followed, so fairly won.'

> 'The sun had mounted spear-high when the onset began and the battle lasted till mid-day, when the enemy were completely broken and routed, and my people victorious and triumphant. By the grace and mercy of Almighty God this difficult affair was made easy to me, and that mighty army, in the course of half a day, was laid in the dust.'

The Results: Ibrāhim lay dead on the field, together with Bikram, the Hindu Rāja of Gwalior, "who had joined the Muslim Sultan in defence of their common country." 6,000 corpses were counted near where the Sultan was found dead; 15,000 or 16,000 had died in different parts of the field. 'On reaching Agra, we found from the accounts of the natives of Hindustan, that 40,000 or 50,000 men had fallen in the field.' 'The land simply changed masters after one supreme effort.' 'To the Afghans of Delhi the battle of Pānipat was their Cannae. It was the ruin of their dominion, the end of their power.' *The battle of Pānipat marks the end of the second stage in Bābur's conquest of Hindustan.*

Ibrāhim Lodi, though not lacking in personal valour, was, in Bābur's own estimation, 'an inexperienced young man careless in his movements, who marched without order, halted or retired without method and engaged without foresight.' The week when the two

armies lay facing each other, went in Bābur's favour: it gave his men time to regain their self-confidence. The Delhi army had come up too precipitately without a halt from the start. It was not disciplined enough for orderly re-adjustments to given situations. A sudden attempt in this direction threw its vast numbers into utter confusion. Bābur was, on the contrary, a tried and resourceful commander, and his veterans were seasoned and disciplined warriors. "His men began the battle in no small alarm: it was their Emperor's cool science and watchful tactics that restored their confidence and gave them back their pluck." Ibrāhim's war-elephants and vast numbers were more a source of weakness than strength against Bābur's scientific combination of cavalry and artillery.

The sequel: After the victory, Bābur at once despatched Humāyun with Khwāja Kalan to Agra, and another party to take charge of the forts and treasures of Delhi. On Friday, 27 April, the *Khutbah* was read in his name at the capital. Marching with the main army, Bābur halted on the Jamuna, opposite Delhi, in order to visit the tombs of Muslim saints and heroes. 'On Thursday, the 28th Rajab, (10th May), about the hour of afternoon prayers I entered Agra and took up my residence in Sultan Ibrāhim's palace.' Here Bābur received from Humāyun, among other treasures, a diamond (Koh-i-noor?) valued at half the daily expenditure of the whole world.' But the father, in generous recognition of his son's services, presented it to Humāyun together with other gifts worth 70,00,000 *dāms* (£20,000). A *pargana* of the value of seven *lacs* was bestowed on Ibrāhim's mother. *Parganas* were also given to each of her *Amirs*. She was conducted with all her effects to a palace, which was assigned for her residence, about a *kos* below Agra. His *Begs* received six to ten *lacs* each (£1,700 to £ 2,800). Every soldier got his share of the booty. Even traders and camp-followers were not forgotten in the distribution, including those who were absent. Friends in Farghāna, Khurāsan, Kāshghar, and Persia, were surprised with gifts of gold and silver, cloth and jewels, and captive slaves. Holy men in Herat, Sāmarkand, Mecca, and Medina, got their offerings; and every person in Kabul, man, woman, slave or free, young and old, received a silver coin as a memento of the victory. The balance was stored up in the vaults of the capital for the support of the army and administration.

Post-Pānipat Problems:

The Afghans: 'When I first arrived in Agra, there was a strong

mutual dislike and hostility between my people and the men of the place. The peasantry and soldiers of the country avoided and fled from my men. Afterwards, everywhere, except only in Delhi and Agra, the inhabitants fortified different posts, while the governors of towns put their fortifications in a posture of defence, and refused to submit or obey.' The nature of the situation he was confronted with, after his victory at Pānipat, is best described in his own words:—

(*a*) Kāsim Sāmbhali, was in Sāmbhal, (*b*) Nizām Khān in Bayāna, (*c*) the Rāja Hasan Khān Mewāti himself in Mewāt. 'That infidel was the prime mover and agitator in all these confusions and insurrections.' (*d*) Kanauj, with the whole country beyond the Ganges, was entirely in the possession of refractory Afghans, such as Nāsir Khān Lohāni, Ma'ruf Farmuli, and a number of other *Amirs* who had been in a state of open rebellion for two years before the death of Ibrāhim.

'At the period I defeated that prince, they had overrun, and were in possession of Kanauj and the country in that quarter, and had advanced and encamped two or three marches on this side of Kanauj. They elected Bihār Khān (or Bahādur Khān), the son of Daryā Khān, as their king, and gave him the name of Sultan Mahmūd. When I came to Agra we could not find grain or provendor, either for ourselves or for our horses. The villagers, out of hostility for us, had taken to rebellion, thieving, and robbery. The roads became impassable.

'I had not time, after the division of treasure, to send proper persons to occupy and protect the different *parganas* and stations.' To make matters worse, the heat was abnormal that year, and many of Bābur's men dropped down dead. Not a few of his *Begs* and best men began to lose heart, objected to remaining in Hindustan, and even began to make preparations for retreat. 'I no sooner heard this murmuring among my troops, than I summoned all my *Begs* to a council. I told them that, by Divine power, I had routed my formidable enemy and achieved the conquest of the numerous provinces and kingdoms which we at present held. And now, what force compels, and what hardship obliges us, without any visible cause, after having worn out our life in accomplishing the desired achievement, to abandon and fly from our conquests and to retreat back to Kabul with every symptom of disappointment and discomfiture? "Let not any one who calls himself my friend, ever henceforward make such a proposal. But if there is any one among you who cannot bring himself to stay, or give up his purpose of returning back, let him depart." Having made this fair and reasonable proposal, the discontented were of necessity compelled, however unwillingly, to renounce their seditious purposes.'

The final subjugation of the Afghans had to be deferred in the face of a more formidable foe.

The Rajputs: Rāṇa Sangrām Singh of Mewar, popularly known as Rāṇa Sanga, and Medini Rāi of Chānderi, were two tough warriors under whose leadership the Rajputs had determined to drive out the

insolent invader. The fact that Muslims like Hasan Khān Mewāti, and Sultan Mahmūd Lodi (brother of Ibrāhim Lodi) had joined with the Rāṇa, made it appear that it was not a war of the Hindus against the Muhammadans but a united national effort against a common enemy of the country. Ahmad Yadgar, in his *Tarikh-i-Salatin-i-Afghana*, writes :

> 'Rāna Sanga who was at that time a powerful chief sent a message to Hasan Khān saying, "The Mughals have entered Hindustan, have slain Sultan Ibrāhim, and taken possession of the country ; it is evident that they will likewise send an army against both of us ; if you will side with me we will be alive, and not suffer them to take possession."

But Bābur himself looked upon this only as a holy war against the infidels with whom had joined some Muslim apostates. This is indicated by his assumption of the title of *Ghāzī* after the victory : 'I used the epithet of *Ghāzī*, in the Imperial titles.' This was necessary to arouse his dispirited and home-sick followers. 'A general consternation and alarm prevailed among great and small. There was not a single person who uttered a manly word, nor an individual who delivered a manly opinion. The *Wazirs*, whose duty it was to give good counsel, and the *Amirs* who enjoyed the wealth of kingdoms, neither spoke bravely, nor was their counsel or deportment such as became men of firmness.' Preliminary skirmishes only confirmed the apprehensions of Bābur's men who had heard disconcerting stories of Rajput valour. Bābur, as Lane-Poole points out, "was now to meet warriors of a higher type than any he had encountered. The Rajputs, energetic, chivalrous, fond of battle and bloodshed, animated by a strong national spirit, were ready to meet face to face the boldest veterans of the camp, and were at all times prepared to lay down their life for their honour." The forebodings of an astrologer, whom Bābur describes as an 'evil-minded rascally fellow,' made things appear more ominous. But Bābur rose equal to the situation, as always he had done :

> 'On Monday, the 23rd of the first Jumada, I had mounted to survey my posts, and, in the course of my ride, was seriously struck with the reflection that I had always resolved one time after another to make effectual repentance.' He had been a confirmed toper like Masūd of Ghazni ; now he determined to renounce wine forever. So 'having sent for the gold and silver goblets and cups, with all the other utensils used for drinking parties, I directed them to be broken, and renounced the use of wine, purifying my mind. The fragments of the goblets, etc. I directed to be divided among the *dervishes* and the poor.' Salt was thrown into the store of wine just received from Ghazni ; all the rest found in the camp was poured upon the ground ; and a well was ordered to be dug, and an almshouse

built on the spot, to commemorate this great religious event. As a boon to his Muhammadan followers and subjects, he gave up the *temgha* or stamp-tax in all his dominions so far as Muslims were concerned. To stiffen the sinews, and summon up the blood of his men, Bābur also made a stirring appeal to them in the following words:–

"Noblemen and soldiers! Every man that comes into this world is subject to dissolution...... How much better is it to die with honour than to live with infamy...... God Most High has been gracious in giving us this destiny, that if we fall we die martyrs, if we conquer we triumph in His Holy Cause. Let us swear with one accord that, by the Great Name of God, we will never turn back from such a death, or shrink from the stress of battle, till our souls are parted from our bodies."

To suit the action to his words, on New Year's Day (12 March 1527), 'they took a number of pagans and cut off their heads, which they brought in ......This raised the spirits of the army wonderfully, and gave them confidence. They swore by the divorce of their wives, and on the Holy Book'; they recited the *fatiha* and said, "O King! God willing, we will not spare ourselves in sacrifice and devotion, so long as breath and life are in our bodies."

Jihād: Bābur declared *Jihād* or holy war on the infidel, on 11 February 1527. The justification for it is given in the following statements:—

(i) 'Although Rāṇa Sanka, the Pagan, when I was in Kabul, had sent me an ambassador with professions of attachment, and had arranged with me, that, if I would march from that quarter into the vicinity of Delhi, he would march from the other side upon Agra; yet, when I defeated Ibrāhim, and took Delhi and Agra, the Pagan, during all my operations, did not make a single movement.' (ii) On the other hand, the Rāṇa also complained of broken faith; and, in particular claimed Kālpi, Dholpur, Bayāna, as well as Agra—all of which had been occupied by Bābur. (iii) Rāṇa Sanga, having reduced Nizām Khān of Bayāna to great extremities, that chief sent a deputation to Bābur, requesting his aid, for which he was ready to pay him due homage. Bābur did not hesitate to accept his allegiance, and sending a force to expel Sanga, confirmed the Khān in possession of Bayāna, which was settled upon him, with all its dependencies, in consideration of his paying an annual tribute of twenty *lacs* of rupees.

The two armies met at Kanua (10 miles from Sikri; 20 from Agra) on Saturday, 16 March 1527. Bābur's arrangements were in the main similar to those at Pānipat, with this difference, that guns this time were mounted on wheeled tripods to facilitate movement. A special feature in the disposition was also the great strength of the

reserve. Bābur in person led the centre, Humāyun was on the right, and Mahdi Khwāja (Bābur's brother-in-law?) on the left. The effectives on the Rajput side, no doubt, outnumbered their antagonists by seven or eight to one; and, although Bābur's army on this occasion was greater than the one he had commanded at Pānipat, "the depression and vacillation which the Pādshāh was at pains to overcome proves that the average morale was not so good".

The Results: The victory of Bābur, was nevertheless, final and complete. 'Hardly a clan of the Rajputs was there but had lost the flower of its princely blood.' Rāṇa Sanga himself escaped badly wounded. The heads of the gallant Rajputs (who had been 'sent to hell') were built into a ghastly tower, and Bābur, as previously stated assumed the title of *Ghāzī* or victor in holy war.

The consequences of the battle of Kanua were most momentous: (i) The menace of Rajput supremacy, which had loomed large before the eyes of the Muhammadans in India for the last ten years, was removed once for all. (ii) The Mughal Empire in India was now firmly established. In the words of R. Williams, "Bābur had definitely seated himself upon the throne of Sultan Ibrāhim and the sign and seal of his achievement had been the annihilation of Sultan Ibrāhim's most formidable antagonists. *Hitherto the occupation of Hindustan might have been looked upon as an episode in Bābur's career of adventure: but from henceforth it became the keynote of his activities for the remainder of his life.* His days of wandering in search of a fortune are now passed away: the fortune is his, and he has but to show himself worthy of it. And it is significant of the new stage in his career which this battle marks that never afterwards does he have to stake his throne and life upon the issue of a stricken field. Fighting there is, and fighting in plenty, to b edone; but fighting for the extension of his power, for the reduction of rebels, for the ordering of his kingdom. It is never fighting for his throne." (iv) "It is also significant," he further observes, "of Bābur's grasp of vital issues that from henceforth *the centre of gravity of his power is shifted from Kabul to Hindustan*...He resolutely remained in India for the rest of his days, fighting, governing, administering, striving to put all things upon a sound basis ere death called him away." (v) Within a year Bābur had struck two decisive blows which shattered the power of two great organised forces: the battle of Pānipat had utterly broken the Afghan power in India; the battle of Kanua (also called Sikri) crushed the great Rajput Confederacy.

Reduction of Rebels: Bābur commissioned his officers to subjugate the rest of the country, and sent them in various directions with small forces to help them. "These little bands fought with utmost zeal, conscious that they were making their own fortunes, while at the same time the territories thus acquired represented an extension of the dominions of their master."

Humāyun conquered Sāmbhal, Jaunpur, Ghāzīpur, and Kālpi; Muhammad Ali Jang-Jang captured Rabiri; Mahdi Khwāja subdued Etāwah; Kanauj was taken by Sultan Muhammad Duldari; and Dholpur by Sultan Junaid Barlas. Sheikh Guren of Kol (Doab) was won over by promise of protection; Sheikh Bāyazid—an important lieutenant of the Lodi king—was granted a *jagir* worth a *crore* of rupees in Oudh. Bayāna and Gwalior had rallied round Bābur for fear of the Rajputs; and the Lohāni and Farmuli chiefs, who had championed the cause of Sultan Mahmūd, melted away before Bābur's concentration of forces. Hasan Khān Mewāti died on the field of Kanua.

When Bābur felt his grip on Hindustan sure beyond doubt, he sent back Humāyun to Badakhshān, and other important officers to other parts of his dominions outside India. Kandahār, ever since its final conquest in 1522, was in Kāmrān's charge. Khwāja Kalan, Bābur's old general, had been sent to Ghazni after the battle of Pānipat. Askari was established in Multan when it was conquered in 1527. Hindāl was at Kābul.

In February 1529, Bābur wrote to Khwāja Kalan in Afghanistan: 'The affairs of Hindustan have at length been brought to some degree of order, and I trust in Almighty God that the time is near at hand when, through His favour, everything will be quite settled here'. But after the battle of Kanua, and before Bābur could realise the hope here expressed, there were at least three more enemies left to overcome :—

1. *Maidāni Rāi of Chānderi*: 'On Monday the 14th of the first Rabi, (9 Dec. 1527) I set out in pursuance of a vow, on a holy war against Chānderi (near Bhopal)......Chānderi had formerly belonged to the Sultans of Māndu...... When Rāṇa Sanka advanced with an army against Ibrāhim as far as Dholpur, that prince's *Amirs* rose against him and on that occasion Chānderi fell into Sanka's hands. He bestowed it on one Maidāni Rāi, a Pagan of great consequence, who was now in the place with 4000 or 5000 Pagans......I sent to him to assure him of my favour and clemency, and offering him Shamsābad in exchange for Chānderi. Two or three considerable people about him were averse to conciliation,......and the treaty broke off without success......So, the

citadel was attacked on all sides......Some of our troops were attacked furiously, and put to the sword. The reason for this desperate sally from their works was, that, on giving up the place for lost, they put to death the whole of their wives and women, and, having resolved to perish, had stripped themselves naked, in which condition they had rushed out to the fight; and engaging with ungovernable desperation, drove our people along the ramparts. Two or three hundred Pagans had entered Maidāni Rāi's house, where numbers of them slew each other. In this way *many went to hell*; and by the favour of God, in the space of two or three *gharis*, I gained this celebrated fort, without raising my standard, or beating my kettle-drum, and without using the whole strength of my arms. On the top of a hill to the north-west of Chānderi, *I erected a tower of the heads of Pagans*......I gave Chānderi, to Ahmad Shāh, the grandson of Sultan Nāsir-ud-dīn, and fixed a revenue of fifty *lacs* to be paid from it to the Imperial treasury.' We also learn from Ahmad Yadgar: 'So much plunder was taken from that heathen army' by the *Amirs* 'that the King's troops obtained sufficient to support them for years.'

2. *Afghan Rebels:* On 2 February 1528, Bābur set out to punish the Afghan rebels who had advanced from Bihar into the Doab, stormed Shamsābad, and driven the Imperial garrison out of Kanauj. At Bābur's approach, the enemy crossed the river Ganges and mustered on its left bank to dispute Bābur's passage. The Emperor reached the great river, on 27 February, built a bridge across its broad stream, by 13 March, put the insurgents to headlong flight, and hotly pursued them as far as Oudh. After this Bābur returned to Agra for the rainy season.

'On Thursday, the 3rd of the first Jumada, I received letters which contained intelligence that Mahmūd, the son of Iskandar, had taken Bihar. On Thursday the 17th, we marched eight *kos*, and halted at Dakdaki, a *pargana* of Kara, on the banks of the Ganges......While in this neighbourhood, intelligence reached us in rapid succession, that Sultan Mahmūd had gathered round him 100,000 Afghans, and was moving upon Chunar; that Sher Khān Sūr, on whom I had bestowed marks of favour, to whom I had given several *parganas*, and whom I left in command in that quarter, had now joined these Afghans...... On the 24th......it appeared that the rebels had come and laid siege to Chunar, but that on getting the certain news of my approach, they were filled with consternation, broke up in confusion and raised the siege.'

3. *Nusrat Shāh of Bengal:* After this the rebels sought refuge in Bengal. 'As I was at peace with Bengal, and had always been the first to enter into any understanding that had a tendency to confirm a friendly state of things,' Bābur started negotiations with Nusrat Shāh, the ruler of Bengal. Failing in this, he sent an ultimatum: 'If he refused to leave the passage open, and neglected to listen to the remonstrances which I made, then whatever evil fell on his head, he must regard that as proceeding from his own act; and he would

have himself only to blame for any unpleasant circumstance that occurred.'

On 6 May 1529, the issue was decided finally at the battle of the Gogra (Buxār). The result was disastrous to the Bengalis: 'The Bengalis are famous for their skill in artillery. On this occasion we had a good opportunity of observing them. They do not direct their fire against a particular point, but discharge at random'. On Bābur's side, "the movement was brilliantly carried out in the face of a determined resistance. Attacked in front and rear and flank, the enemy broke and fled. Good generalship had once more guided valour to victory." A treaty of peace was concluded with Bengal, according to which each party was to respect the sovereignty of the other and neither party was to shelter or support the other's enemies. Sheikh Bāyazid, who had throughout sided with the rebels once more attacked Lucknow, but could not hold on for long.

'It appeared that on Saturday, the 12th of Ramzān, the enemy had made an attack, but could effect nothing. During the assault, some hay that had been collected, being set on fire by the fireworks, turpentine, and other combustibles that were thrown on it, the inside of the fort became as hot as an oven, and it was impossible to stand on the parapet, and consequently the fort was taken.' 'On the 18th Shawwal at midnight I reached the garden of *Hasht-bihisht* at Agra'.

Bābur's Last Days:

Bābur had very few days left to him now on this side of the grave. When everything was quite settled in Hindustan, he had written to Khwāja Kalan in Afghanistan, 'I shall set out for your quarters, God willing, without losing a moment. How can the delight of those lands ever be erased from the heart? How can one like me, who has vowed abstinence and purity of life, possibly forget the delicious melons and grapes of that happy land? The other day they brought me a musk-melon: as I cut it up I felt a deep home-sickness, and sense of exile from my land, and I could not help weeping.' Accordingly, he even set out and went as far as Lahore, where he met his son Kāmrān. He was disappointed at Humāyun's failure against the Uzbegs. He had recalled Hindāl, his youngest son, from Kabul. The strain of his ceaseless campaigns, wanderings, and early drinking excesses, had told upon him rather heavily, despite his extraordinary energy and strength.

He had been known to take up a man under each arm, and run with them round the battlements of a fortress, leaping the embrasures; and even in

March 1529 he notes: 'I swam across the river Ganges for amusement. I counted my strokes, and found that I swam over in thirty-three strokes. I then took breath, and swam back to the other side. I had crossed by swimming every river I had met, except only the Ganges.' He was also perpetually in saddle, riding 80 miles a day sometimes, and the rapidity of his marches was often amazing.

He had even survived the poison administered to him by Ibrāhim Lodi's mother. Now his strength was on the decline; even his mental vigour seemed to have been affected. There was a plot to set aside Humāyun, in favour of Mir Muhammad Mahdi Khwāja (Bābur's sister's husband?). Humāyun received a timely warning, and hastened to Agra, which he reached on 27 June 1529, together with his mother. "If God should grant you the throne and crown," Bābur said to him, "do not put your brothers to death, but look sharply after them." In the summer of 1530 Humāyun fell dangerously ill. In this state he was carried from Sāmbhal to Delhi. Hearing of this, Bābur tenderly expressed to Māham, Humāyun's mother, "Although I have other sons, I love none as I love your Humāyun. I crave that this cherished child may have his heart's desire and live long, and I desire the kingdom for him because he has not his equal in distinction!" Every school-boy knows the story how Bābur bore away his son's illness and sacrificed himself in order to save Humāyun. As the latter recovered the former became worse; and after two or three months Bābur died (26 December 1530).

Just before this he had called his *Amirs* together and told them: "For years it has been in my heart to surrender my throne to Humāyun, and retire to the Gold-Scattering Garden. By the Divine Grace I have obtained in health all things but the fulfilment of this wish. Now, when I am laid low by illness, I charge you to acknowledge Humāyun as my successor, and to remain loyal to him. Be of one heart and mind towards him, and I hope to God that Humāyun will also bear himself well before men." Then turning to Humāyun he repeated his admonition to him regarding, in particular, the treatment of his brothers: "Humāyun, I commit to God's keeping you and your brothers and all my kinsfolk and your people and my people; and all of those I confide to you ......The cream of my testamentary direction is this: *Do nought against your brothers even though they may deserve it.*"

By his own desire, Babur's body was carried to Kabul and buried there in 'the sweetest spot' on a hill-side, amidst beloved surroundings, a cool-running stream and sweet-smelling flowers.

"Death makes no conquest of this Conqueror,
For now he lives in Fame."

Estimate of Bābur :

V. A. Smith characterised Bābur as "the most brilliant Asiatic prince of his age, and worthy of a high place among the sovereigns of any age or country;" while Havell thought "His engaging personality, artistic temperament, and romantic career make him one of the most attractive figures in the history of Islam." 'In his person,' Ferishta wrote, 'Bābur was handsome, his address was engaging and unaffected, his countenance was pleasing, and his disposition affable. Last but not the least, Bābur's own cousin, Mirza Haidar, described him as 'adorned with various virtues and clad with numberless excellences, above all which towered bravery and humanity...... Indeed, no one of his family before him ever possessed such talents, nor any of his race perform such amazing exploits or experience such strange adventures.'

'In the composition of Turki poetry Bābur was second only to Amir Ali Shir. He has written a *divan* in the most lucid Turki. He invented a style of verse called *mubai-yan*, and was the author of a most useful treatise on jurisprudence which has been generally adopted. He also wrote an essay on Turki prosody, more elegant than any other......Then there is his *Wakai*, or Turki *Memoirs*, written in simple, unaffected, yet pure style. He excelled in music and other arts.'

Bābur was undoubtedly a man of outstanding genius, a lover of fine arts, a born naturalist, a keen and critical observer of men and things, and an accomplished writer who immortalised himself, not merely as the founder of one of the most glorious dynasties that have ruled in India, but also as the prince of auto-biographers by bequeathing to posterity his delightful *Memoirs* which abound in descriptions of the countries he visited, their scenery, climate, productions, and works of art and industries, 'more full and accurate than will, perhaps, be found in equal space, in any modern traveller; and considering the circumstances in which they were compiled, truly surprising.' "No part of his character," Erskine has pointed out, "is more admirable than his uniform humanity and kindliness of disposition. If, in the course of his *Memoirs* some cruel executions appear, they belong to the age, not to the man. The historians of his reign remark, that whenever any, either of his nobles or brothers, had revolted or entered into rebellion against him, no sooner did they acknowledge their offence and return to their duty than, to use the words of Khāfi Khān, contrary to the customs of the princes of Persia, Arabia, or India, he not only forgave them, but never retained

towards them any feeling of resentment." Bābur was eminently a man of faith. "Nothing happens," he used to say, "but by the will of God. Reposing ourselves on His protection, we must go forward." He attributed every bit of his success to the grace of the Almighty. After his victory over Ibrāhim, even before entering the capital, he reverently visited the tombs of the Muslim saints and heroes in the vicinity of Delhi. His glorious renunciation of wine before the battle of Kanua was an act of genuine repentance for his sins before God.

Bābur as a General: The history of Bābur that we have traced is nothing if it is not a record of brilliant generalship. Himself 'an admirable horseman, a fine shot, a good swordsman, and a mighty hunter,' Bābur was well calculated to catch the imagination of his soldiers. Besides these qualities, he possessed in an eminent degree the supreme virtues of a born leader of men. He enjoyed and suffered with his men, and thoroughly understood every man in his army, both officer and private.

In a noble passage in his *Memoirs* Bābur describes one of his early adventures. It is worthy of citation as throwing light upon his character as a leader of men:

> 'That night the storm was terrible, and snow fell so heavily that we all expected to die together. When we reached the mountain cave the storm was at its worst. We dismounted at its mouth. Deep snow! a one-man road! and even on that stamped-down and trampled road, pit-falls for horses! The days at their shortest! The first arrivals reached the cave by day-light, later they dismounted wherever they happened to be; dawn found many still in the saddle. The cave secured was small. I took a shovel, and scraping and clearing the snow away made a place for myself as big as a prayer-carpet near its mouth. I dug down breast high, but did not reach the ground. This made me a little shelter from the wind when I sat right down in it. They begged me to go inside, but I would not. *I felt that for me to be in warm shelter and comfort whilst my men were out in the snow and drift, for me to be sleeping at ease inside, whilst my men were in misery and distress, was not a man's act, and far from comradeship. What strong men can stand, I would stand: for, as the Persian proverb says, "In the company of friends, Death is a nuptial feast."* So I remained in the snow and wind in the hole that I had dug out, with snow four-hands thick on my head and back and ears.'

But, where strictness was called for, Bābur never hesitated: Ferishta observes, 'He even used violence to prevent outrage'; 'it is certain', he adds, 'his presence alone saved the honour of Daulat Khān's family, (when Bābur's men would have otherwise outraged it) Bābur preserved, by his exertions on this occasion, a fine library

collected by Ghāzī Khān (Daulat Khān's son), who was a poet and a man of learning.' Bābur himself records: 'Having learned that the troops had exercised some severities towards the inhabitantsof Bahrah, and were using them ill, I sent out a party, who having seized a few of the soldiers that had been guilty of the excesses, I put some of them to death, and slit the noses of some others and had them led about the camp in that condition. As I reckoned the countries that had belonged to the Turks as my own territories, I admitted of no plundering or pillage.'

What is perhaps more necessary in a commander of armies, he correctly gauged both the strength and the weakness of the commanders and armies that were opposed to him. Above all, to his native courage he added the unbending tenacity of his will and the unquenchable fire of his ambition. 'Filled as I was by the ambition of conquest and broad sway,' he writes, 'one or two reverses could not make me sit down doing nothing.'

> What though the field be lost,
> All is not lost—the unconquerable will,
> And courage never to submit or yield.

Bābur as a Ruler: The Empire of Bābur extended from Badakhshān to Bengal, from the Oxus to the Ganges: in India alone, from Bhīra (Bahrah) in the west to Bihar in the east; from the Himalayas in the north to Chānderi in the South. But 'I had not time......to send proper persons to occupy and protect the different *parganas* and stations.' Bābur was too much preoccupied with wars and conquests to devote any serious attention to the administrative organisation of his vast dominions. Having conquered, his primary consideration seemed to be to maintain his kingdom in peace and order. This, no doubt, he was well qualified to do with his military genius and efficient army. But to organise conquest and to organise administration are two different things; the latter calls for genius of an altogether different type. Sher Shāh and Akbar possessed this, but not Bābur.

To court danger and hardship, and show valour in arms; to shun indolence and ease, as unbecoming of a King; to consult *Begs* and ministers; to avoid private parties; to call the court to public levees twice every day; and to keep up the strength and discipline of the army—these were the principles he had inculcated upon Humāyun; and they seem to have nearly exhausted Bābur's kingly code. He was, no doubt, anxious to protect his subjects from the oppression

of free-booters, as is indicated by the following casual observation in his *Memoirs* :—

'Every time that I have entered Hindustan, the Jats and Gujars have regularly poured down in prodigious numbers from their hills and wilds, in order to carry off oxen and buffaloes. These were the wretches that really inflicted the chief hardships, and were guilty of the severest oppression in the country. These districts (in the Punjab) in former times, had been in a state of revolt and yielded very little revenue that could be come at. On the present occasion, when I had reduced the whole of the neighbouring districts to subjection, they began to repeat their practices..... I sought out the persons guilty of these outrages, discovered them and ordered two or three of the number to be cut in pieces.'

Another instance of Bābur's ruthlessness in putting down marauders is also recorded by Ahmad Yadgar: 'When he reached Sirhind, one of the *Kāzis* of Samana complained to him that Mohan Mundahir had attacked his estate and burned it, plundered all his property, and slain his son. His Majesty, the Conqueror of the world, appointed Ali Kuli Hamadāni, with three thousand horse, to avenge the injury which the Mundahirs had done to the petitioner......Nearly a thousand of the Mundahirs were killed, and a thousand men, women, and children taken prisoners. The slaughter was great, and there was a heap of severed heads; and Mohan was taken alive. When the prisoners were brought to Delhi, all the women were given to the Mughals. The offending Mundahir was buried in the earth up to his waist, and then pierced to death with arrows. Such was the respect for the army which this produced amongst the people of Hind that thenceforth no one ventured either to rebel or disobey.'

Apart from this, he also did what was necessary, in order to ensure speedy communication between the principal parts of his dominions; *e. g.*, he took care to maintain intact the Grand Trunk Road between Agra and Kabul, establishing a regular series of post-houses, at a distance of about fifteen miles from each other, and stationed relays of six horses and proper officers at each. Ferishta says, 'Whenever he marched, he always caused roads to be measured after him, a custom which prevails among the Emperors of Hindustan to this day, and the statute he made concerning the measurement of distances has hitherto remained in force.... The *gaz Sikandari* or yard of Sikandar, which prevailed when he reached India was suspended by the *Bāburi gaz* which continued in use till the beginning of the reign of Jahāngeer Pādshāh.'

Being a man of high aesthetic tastes, Bābur also delighted in

creating beautiful *baghs* and buildings, aqueducts and bridges. 'In Agra alone,' he writes, 'I every day employed on my palaces 680 persons; and in Agra, Sikri, Bayāna, Dholpur, Gwalior, and Koil, there were every day employed on my works 1491 stone-cutters.' Ahmad Yadgar also informs us : 'In the second year of His Majesty's reign a beautiful garden was made on the borders of the river Jumna ......he passed his time in that garden, in company with Mughal companions and friends, in pleasure and enjoyment and carousing, in the presence of enchanting dancing-girls with rosy cheeks, who sang tunes, and displayed their accomplishments...... Mirza Kāmrān also prepared a splendid garden similar to this in Lahore.'

Bābur had come to a country that was rich beyond the dreams of avarice. 'The chief excellency of Hindustan,' he noted, 'is that it is a large country, and has abundance of gold and silver.' This brought him a large revenue, utilising the old machinery of collection, and no new organisation of Bābur's creation. So, 'the countries from Bahrah to Bihar, which are now under my dominion, yield a revenue of 52 *crores* (*tankās*), as will appear from the particular and detailed statement.* Of this amount, *parganas* to the value of 8 or 9 *crores* are in the possession of some *Rāis* or *Rājas*, who from old times have been submissive, and have received these *parganas* for the purpose of confirming them in their obedience.'

*"Everything considered," Erskine reckoned "£4,212,000 as the amount of Bābur's nominal revenue; a very large sum when the working of the American mines had not yet produced its full effect." Thomas's estimate was 2,60,00,000 silver *tankās* or £2,600,000. Here it may also be pointed out that Bābur was responsible for the introduction of anonymous coinage in India: "The practice of striking coin in subordinate cities," Thomas writes, "also appears to have been an innovation introduced by the Mughals, who drew a wise distinction between the importance of the lower currency of copper and money fabricated from the more costly gold or silver. The absence of the Sultan's name likewise indicates a departure from Indian practice, under which we have uniformly seen the designation of the supreme authority impressed upon the copper money equally with the coins of higher value. Bābur's introduction of so much of the leading ideals of his Bokhara money into Hindustan was destined to be attended with more permanence in the coins of the poor, whose standard he adopted, than in that of his more elaborately executed *dirhams* and *ashrafis*, in which he outraged local associations. The average weight of the pieces of this class is very uniform at something over 140 grains, a total we have frequently met with in the earlier coins of the Pathan issues, 80 of which went to the old *tankah*, 4 to the modified *Sikandari*, and 32 to the foreign *Bābari and Shāh Rukhi*."

Over a great portion of his dominions outside India, especially in the more inaccessible hills and secluded valleys, as Erskine has pointed out, Bābur's sway was 'hardly admitted by the rude tribes that traversed them; and prudence was satisfied with some easy acknowledgment which was treated as tribute. In upper and lower Sindh the *khutbah* was read in his name; but though his supremacy was acknowledged, he had little direct power. To the east of the Indus, all the Punjab, including Multan, and to the south and east of the Sutlej, the rich provinces of Hindustan lying between the river and Bihar on the one side, and the Himalaya mountains and countries of the Rajputs and of Mālwa on the other, were subject to him; the western boundary being nearly a line marked by the fortresses of Bayāna, Rantambhor, Gwalior, and Chānderi. On the south towards Bengal, the limits of his authority are not well defined. Though he possessed the greater part of Bihar, some portion of it, especially the hilly or wooded parts of the country, were still held by the remains of the Afghans or by native chiefs. On the frontier of his Empire, the Rajput principalities, the shattered kingdoms of Mālwa, Bundelkhand, and Bengal were still independent states.

'There was little uniformity in the political situation of the different parts of this vast Empire. Each kingdom, each province, each district, and (we may almost say) every village, was governed in ordinary matters by its peculiar customs. The higher officers of government exercised not only civil but criminal jurisdiction, even in capital cases, with little form and under little restraint. We have very imperfect means of knowing what were the taxes then levied. The chief revenue was the land-tax directly raised on the land in fully settled and quiet provinces; but where the country remained under its native chiefs, or was not fully subdued, was drawn by the Emperor in the shape of an annual tribute. Though frequently the officers of the army or government were rewarded by *jagirs* or estates, over which they had very often jurisdiction, both civil and criminal, their legal power over the land itself did not extend to a property in the soil, but to the exercise of such rights as belong to the government. The *jagirdar* or holder of *jagir*, was properly in Musalman times, merely an officer of government, and removable at pleasure, except where the grant had been made hereditary. Besides the land-tax, there was a duty levied on the frontier, on goods imported by caravans or otherwise. The *temgha*, or stamp, was the mark by which on cattle and in goods, the payment of the duties was ascertained. There

were transit duties on merchandise transported from one part of the country to another. There was a shop-tax, chiefly in towns; and, in parts of the country where the Muhammadans had a confirmed and safe ascendency, the *jiziya* or poll-tax was levied on all who were not Musalmans.'

Bābur was, with all his virtues, a Musalman Emperor. When he had killed the Pagans (as he called the Hindus) he piled up a pyramid of their skulls, at least for the delectation of his orthodox followers. He considered the war against the Rajputs as *jihād* or 'holy war,' and assumed the title of *Ghāzī*, after his victory at Kanua. He spoke of the self-immolation of the Rajputs at Chānderi as '*going to hell.*' When he remitted the *temgha* after his penitence and vow to renounce wine, it was only Musalmans who were exempted from it, and not the Hindus. After the fall of Chānderi, as Ferishta tells us, he 'did not fail to rebuild and repair the mosques in Chānderi, Sārangpur, Rantambhor and Raisen which had been partly destroyed and otherwise injured by being converted into cattle-sheds, by Medini Rāi's orders.' Bābur himself stated on his conquest of Chānderi, that he converted 'the mansion of infidelity' into 'a mansion of faith.' All these facts make it difficult to accept the too liberal policy outlined in the Bhopāl MS. ascribed to Bābur:—

'O my son! People of diverse religions inhabit India, and it is a matter of thanks-giving to God that the King of kings has entrusted the government of this country to you.

It therefore behoves you that

1. You should not allow religious prejudices to influence your mind, and administer impartial justice, having due regard to religious susceptibilities and religious customs of all sections of the people.

2. In particular, refrain from the slaughter of cows which will help you to obtain a hold on the hearts of the people of India; thus you will bind the people of the land to yourself by ties of gratitude.

3. You should never destroy places of worship of any community, and always be justice-loving so that relations between the King and his subjects may remain cordial and thereby secure peace and contentment in the land.

4. The propagation of Islam will be better carried on with the sword of love and obligation than with the sword of oppression.

5. Always ignore the mutual dissensions of Shiahs and Sunnis, otherwise they will lead to the weakness of Islam.

6. Treat the different peculiarities of your subjects as the different seasons of the year so that the body politic may remain free from disease.'

But to say this, is not to assert the contrary. Bābur was beyond question a man of deep faith in God; but his belief in Islam must

have sat comparatively lightly on his mind. He had abjured his orthodoxy and become a Shiah to win the support of the Shāh of Persia to his cause. At the same time, he had refused to persecute his quandom orthodox coreligionists at the command of his newly accepted suzerain. There is no evidence of his ever having destroyed a Hindu temple or otherwise persecuted the Hindus on account of their religion. On the other hand, there is at least one reference to his equal recognition of the Hindu and Turki *Amirs* who had enlisted in his service. 'On Thursday, the 19th Shaban, I called the *Amirs*,' he writes, 'both *Turki and Hindu*, to a council, and took their opinion about passing the river.' This was during his last campaign, in Bengal (1529). At least six Hindu Rājas, and among them Rāja Bikramjīt of Rantambhor (second son of Rāṇa Sanga), accepted Bābur's sway and paid their tribute.

To conclude in the words of R. Williams: "Unfortunately, Bābur, being no administrative genius, but a plain warrior with statesmanlike instincts, found it necessary to carry on the administrative plan which he found already in existence, namely, that of parcelling the dominions among his officers, with the understanding that each was responsible for the good order of the districts under his control. The consequences of this plan had always been the same: the monarchy, having erected an artificial barrier between itself and the local administration, lost little by little all its authority, until last of all its prestige departed, and the throne became the prey for contending factions. The great *Amirs* on the other hand, gained what the crown lost. During the reign of Bābur this does not become apparent, partly because he was invested with the prestige of a conqueror: partly because the time was too short for the consequences of his policy to make themselves felt. Even before he died, however, the symptoms of radical unsoundness in the administration are not far to seek. The old haphazard financial system entirely failed to provide means for the up-keep of the professional soldiers, like the gunners and matchlockmen, who were paid directly from the royal revenue. Having distributed with lavish generosity the royal hoards in Delhi and Agra, Bābur suddenly found himself with an empty treasury. For the moment the deficit was met by a levy of 30 per cent. on the revenues of all great officers. But in the time of Humāyun there is a repetition of the old story of financial breakdown, accompanied by revolution, intrigue, and the dethronement of a dynasty."

SOME RELEVANT DATES

A.D.

1517 Death of Sikander Lodi ; accession of Ibrāhim Lodi at Delhi, and his brother Jalāl Khān at Jaunpur. Portuguese enter Chittagong.

1518 Execution of Jalāl Khān and imprisonment of other brothers by Ibrāhim Lodi. Muzāffar II of Gujarat restores Mahmūd Khaljī to Mālwa driving out Medini Rai. Recall of Albuquerque ; beginning of Portuguese decline.

1519 Bābur in trans-Indus territory. Defeat of Adil Shāh at Rāichur by Vijayanagara. Accession of Nasrat Shāh in Bengal. Mahmūd of Mālwa defeated but reinstated by Rāṇa Sanga.

1520 Bābur's 3rd invasion. Rāichur conquered by Krishnadeva Rāya. Sind occupied by Shāh Beg Arghūn. Rāṇa Sanga defeated by Muzāffar II of Gujarat.

1521 Badakhshān bestowed on Humāyun by Bābur. Death of Ahmed Shāh III Bahmani ; Amir Barid raises Alā-ud-dīn to the throne.

1522 Diu and Chāul submit to the Portuguese.

1523 Alā-ud-dīn Bahmani deposed and murdered ; Wali Shāh raised to the throne. War between Bijapur and Ahmednagar.

1524 Ahmednagar confederacy defeated by Bijapur. Shāh Husain Arghūn takes Multan. Ālam Khān Lodi flies to Bābur. Death of Vasco da Gama at Cochin.

1525 Kaleem-ullah last of the Bahmanis raised to the throne by Amir Barid.

1526 Bābur's victory over Ibrāhim at Pānipat. Death of Muzāffar II of Gujarat ; accession and deposition of Sikander Shāh and Nāsir Khān ; Accession of Bahādur Shāh ; Multan becomes a dependency.

1527 Rāṇa Sanga defeated by Bābur at Kanua. Khāndesh and Berar armies defeat Ahmednagar. Gujarat fleet defeated by Portuguese at Chāul. Death of Chaitanya in Bengal. German troops pillage Rome.

1528 Chānderi taken by Bābur. Rantambhor surrendered by Rāṇa Sanga's son (Bikramjīt). Bābur crosses the Ganges.

1529 Bābur comes to terms with Bengal. Bahādur Shāh destroys Ahmednagar. Sultan Suleimān of Bagdad besieges Vienna.

1530 Bābur's death at Agra ; Humāyun's accession (at the age of 22)—rules till 1539. Henry VIII of England quarrels with the Pope.

CHAPTER X

THE EMPIRE IN TRANSITION

The Empire whose foundation was so arduously laid by Bābur was nevertheless precarious and unstable in character. The strength and security of an arch depends upon its key-stone; in the present case it was too weak to hold on steadily for long. The story of Humāyun's loss and re-acquisition of his heritage is not less fascinating than the adventures of his father. It is also instructive as showing the vital dependence of the Empire on the personal character of the monarch. Humāyun's life divides itself into four clear periods: (1) Early Life up to his Accession (1508-30); (2) Struggles to maintain his Inheritance (1530-40); (3) Fifteen Years of Exile (1540-55); and (4) Restoration and Death (1555-56).

Early Life of Humāyun:

Humāyun was born on 6 March 1508 in the citadel of Kabul. He mounted the throne, at Agra, on 29 December 1530, at the age of twenty-three,—three days after the death of Bābur. Khwandamir says: 'The hand of the kindness of the Creator of souls and substances put the happy robe of royalty on the person of this able monarch, the Conqueror of the world. On Friday, the 9th of the said month, in the *Jāma Masjid* at Agra the *Khutbah* was read in the name and title of this noble King, and the noise of congratulations which arose from the crowd of people reached beyond the heavens.' The *Tabakāt-i-Akbari* adds: 'On the death of the Emperor Bābur, Prince Humāyun, who arrived from Sāmbhal, ascended the throne at Agra, *with the support of Amir Nizām-ud-dīn Ali Khalifa, on the* 9th Jumada-l-awwal, 937 H. The officers expressed their devotion, and the chiefs and officers were treated with great kindness. The *mansabs* and offices which were held under the last sovereign were confirmed, and the royal favour made every one happy and contented.'

On the death of his cousin, Khān Mirza, in 1520, Humāyun, at the age of twelve, had been appointed to the government of Badakhshān. Bābur himself visited the province, together with Humāyun's mother, to install the young Prince in his first charge.

When Bābur invaded India, in 1525, Humāyun joined him with a contingent from Badakhshān. In this campaign Humāyun won his victory over a force from Hisar-Fīrūzā, which was on its way to join Ibrāhim Lodi (1526). After Pānipat, Humāyun, who had played his part well, received a great diamond and gifts worth 70,000,00 *dāms* (about £ 20,000). Humāyun also led the army against the Afghan insurgents in the east, and captured Sāmbhal, Jaunpur, Ghāzīpūr, and Kālpi. In the battle of Kanua (1527), Humāyun led the right wing of the Mughal army and was well rewarded. In 1528, when he was back in Badakhshān, Bābur ordered him to advance with the support of his brothers to 'Hisar, Sāmarkand, or Merv, as may be most available,' adding, 'This is the time for you to court danger and hardship, and show your valour in arms. Fail not to quit yourself strenuously to meet every emergency; indolence and ease agree ill with kingship.' He also tendered him much good advice in the same letter, urging Humāyun, among other things, 'to act handsomely by his brother Kāmrān; not to complain of loneliness in Badakhshān, as it was unworthy of a prince; to consult his *Begs* and ministers, particularly Khwāja Kalan; to avoid private parties; but to call the court to public levees twice daily; and above all to keep up the strength and discipline of the army.'

In spite of all this care and anxiety on the part of Bābur, Humāyun precipitately returned to India in 1529. Bābur thus enthusiastically describes the advent of his son.

'I was just talking with his mother about him when in he came. His presence opened our hearts like rosebuds, and made our eyes shine like torches. It was my rule to keep open table every day, but on this occasion, I gave feasts in his honour, and showed him every kind of distinction. We lived together for some time in the greatest intimacy. The truth is that his conversation had an inexpressible charm, and he realised absolutely the ideal of perfect manhood.'

But why did Humāyun desert his charge? The reasons were three: (i) His own failure against the Uzbegs who were making fresh incursions; (ii) Bābur's failing health, and his call to Hindāl from Kabul to be by his side; and (iii) *the conspiracy at Agra to supersede Humāyun.*

This last was in favour of Mir Muhammad Mahdi Khwāja who was Bābur's brother-in-law (sister's husband), and who had been in charge of the left wing of the Mughal army at the battle of Kanua, where Humāyan led the right wing. The origin and details of this intrigue are of little value for us, since it proved abortive. But, as

Rushbrook-Williams observes, "that the scheme should have been considered feasible at all is eloquent testimony of Bābur's feebleness in body and mind." Humāyun had met Kāmrān and Hindāl at Kābul; and they had agreed that, in view of the grave conspiracy which was afoot at Agra, Humāyun should hasten to the capital and Hindāl should take his place in Badakhshān. Ultimately, Bābur sent Suleimān Mirza to that distant province. The rest of the story has already been told. The conspiracy being nipped in the bud, Humāyun spent some time on his estate in Sāmbhal. Then followed his illness and Bābur's affectionate sacrifice on 26 December 1530. Before this happened Bābur had commended Humāyun to his nobles in unmistakeable terms: "Now when I am laid low by illness, I charge you to acknowledge Humāyun as my successor, and to remain loyal to him. Be of one heart and mind towards him, and I hope to God that Humāyun will also bear himself well towards men." But no sooner was Bābur's breath stilled in death, or, to use Khwandamir's phrase, 'left the throne of this world for the eternal heaven,' than Humāyun's troubles began.

Humāyun's Political Inheritance:

Bābur had bequeathed to Humāyun 'a congeries of territories, uncemented by any bond of union or of common interest except that which had been embodied in his life. In a word, when he died, the Mughal dynasty like the Muhammadan dynasties which had preceded it had sent down no root into the soil of Hindustan.' Bābur had not annexed Bengal to the east, nor the great provinces of Mālwa and Gujarat, now united under one king (Bahādur Shāh), to the south. The many chiefs of Rajputāna were cowed but not subdued, and in most of the outlying parts of the kingdom the Mughal power was but slightly recognised.

The Afghans: Numerous Afghan chiefs still held powerful fiefs, and these men had not forgotten that the kings of Delhi had been Afghans but a few years before. When a member of the deposed dynasty (Sultan Mahmūd Lodi) appeared amongst them in Bihar, there were all the materials for a formidable insurrection. Thus, even in his inherited dominions—about an eighth part of all India—Humāyun was not secure from rivals and revolts. The principal rallying centres for these Afghans who were all 'ripe for revolt,' were (i) *Mahmūd Lodi:* the brother of Ibrāhim, whom Bābur had driven away but not crushed. He was supported by the old heads of the Afghan nobility,

Baban and Bāyazid, who though lately driven into the recesses of the eastern provinces and Bihar, were only waiting for a fit opportunity to return and re-occupy the kingdom from which they had been expelled. The King of Bengal, who had married a sister of Mahmūd Lodi, also supported him. (ii) *Sher Khān Sūr*, who was 'the most capable, unscrupulous, and ambitious man in the whole Afghan party, had joined the rebels even during the last days of Bābur, although the latter had 'bestowed on him many marks of favour, and given him several *parganas* and put him in command in the east.' He looked upon the Mughals with great contempt as indicated by his following statement:—

> 'If fortune favours me, I can drive these Mughals back out of Hindustan; they are not our superiors in war, but we let slip the power that we had by reason of our dissensions. Since I had been among the Mughals, I have observed their conduct and found them lacking in order and discipline; while those who profess to lead them, in the pride of birth and rank, neglect the duty of supervision, and leave everything to officials whom they blindly trust. These subordinates act corruptly in every case......they are led by lust of gain, and make no distinction between soldier and civilian, foe or friend.'

Fair or otherwise, this estimate only serves to reveal the ambition and attitude of Sher Khān, who was soon to drive Humāyun into exile and occupy his throne. (iii) *Ālam Khān* or Alā-ud-dīn Lodi, the uncle of Ibrāhim, was one of those that had invited Bābur to India, and fought against his nephew at Pānipat. He had later fallen into disgrace and was confined in a fort in Badakhshān. Since the death of Bābur, Alā-ud-dīn had effected his escape, and sought refuge with Bahādur Shāh of Gujarat. 'Without any open declaration of war with Humāyun, Bahādur Shāh liberally supplied Alā-ud-dīn with money and enabled him, in a very short time, to assemble a large force, and to send it against Agra, under his son Tatar Khān. This army, so hastily collected, was as speedily dispersed; and Tatar Khān fell in battle, at the head of a division which remained faithful in the desertion.' Bahādur Shāh gave shelter not merely to Alā-ud-dīn Lodi, but also to another of Humāyun's rivals, presently to be noticed. Briefly, besides the prestige and power he had acquired over his southern neighbours, Bahādur Shāh, who was ruler of Gujarat and Mālwa, "was actively pressing his triumphs over the Rajputs and rapidly approaching within striking distance of Agra."

Cousins and Brothers: Besides the Afghans, Humāyun had rivals and enemies nearer home: (i) *Muhammad Zamān Mirza* was the grandson of Sultan Husain of Herat, and had married his

cousin Ma'Suma, a step-sister of Humāyun. He had shown himself a capable general in Bābur's campaigns. (ii) *Muhammad Sultan Mirza* was also a descendant of Timūr and grandson of the late Sultan of Khurāsan. From his royal birth and station, he too was considered worthy to aspire to the throne. (iii) *Mir Muhammad Mahdi Khwāja,* a brother-in-law of Bābur, was the centre of the abortive conspiracy which has already been noticed. Bābur's prime-minister and life-long friend Khalifa was interested in him. He was in command of a division of the army, and belonged to the nobility of religion. At Kanua, as we have seen, he was put in charge of the left wing, as Humāyun led the right wing. So with the army he had enjoyed equality of status with the present Emperor. (iv) *Kāmrān Mirza* was the most dangerous of all Humāyun's brothers. He was in charge of Kabul and Kandahār at the time of Bābur's death. Bābur, as we have noticed had commanded Humāyun 'to act handsomely by his brother Kāmrān.' Askari and Hindāl were the other two brothers of Humāyun. Elphinstone remarks, "From his having assigned no shares to his younger children, it is probable that Bābur did not intend to divide the Empire; but Kāmrān showed no disposition to give way to his brother; and as he was in possession of a strong and warlike country among the hereditary subjects of his family, he had a great advantage over Humāyun, who could not assemble an army without evacuating his new and disaffected provinces.' "Ever weak and shifty," says Lane-Poole, "Askari and Hindāl were dangerous only as tools for ambitious men to play upon."

Humāyun's Military Weakness:

Surrounded as Humāyun was with astute and powerful enemies on every side, what was most necessary in him was 'a firm grasp of the military situation and resolution to meet it'. Both these qualities, Humāyun lamentably lacked. "It was a situation that called for boundless energy and soldierly genius." On the north-west was Kāmrān, 'a surly ill-conditioned traitor, unworthy of Babur's seed,' and the most formidable of Humāyun's brothers. On the east were the Afghans under Mahmūd Lodi and Sher Khān. On the south was Bahādur Shāh, supporting the pretenders.

'The army was not a national one, connected by common language and country, but a mixed body of adventurers, Chaghatai, Uzbek, Mughal, Persian, Afghan, and Indian. Even the Chaghatai chiefs, who had enjoyed most of the Emperor's

confidence and favour, were not perfectly unanimous. Though attached to the family of Bābur, as the representatives of that revered prince and of the great Taimur, yet no eminent chief or head of a tribe considered the crown itself as beyond the range of his ambition. It was the age of revolution; and the kingdoms on every side—Persia, Samarkand, Bokhara, Hisar, Balkh and Hindustan itself,—saw the throne occupied by adventurers, or the immediate descendants of adventurers, not more distinguished than themselves... Under such circumstances, a thousand unforeseen accidents might occur to blow the smouldering embers of intrigue and faction into a flame.'

In such a crisis, the personal character of the prince was a matter of vital importance. But Humāyun, though he possessed all the humaner virtues of his great father, lamentably lacked 'the decision and spirit of command, without which no prince can secure the respect and confidence of his subjects.' He was too gentle and good to be successful in such an age and under such circumstances; his failure was in no small measure due to his 'beautiful but unwise clemency. Instead of taking a statesmanlike view of the situation, meeting the most pressing danger first, and crushing one antagonist before he engaged another, he frittered away his army in divided commands, and deprived it of its full strength; he left one enemy unsubdued behind him while he turned to meet another; and when victory by chance rewarded his courage, rather than his tactics, he reposed upon his laurels and made merry with his friends while his foes used the precious time in gathering their forces for a fresh effort......Humāyun's troops were still the men who had won Delhi and defeated Rāṇa Sanga, and Bābur's generals were still in command of their divisions. But Humāyun weakened their valour and destroyed their confidence by division and vacillation, neglected the counsels of the commanders, and displayed such indecision that it is a marvel that any army still adhered to his falling fortunes.'

Division of the Empire:

On the day of Humāyun's accession, Nizām-ud-dīn Ahmad writes, Mirza Hindāl arrived from Badakhshān and was received with great kindness. He was gratified with the grant of two of the treasures of former kings. The territories were then divided: (i) Mirza Hindāl received the district of Mewāt (Alwar) in *jagir*; (ii) the Punjab, Kabul, and Kandahār were settled as the *jagir* of Mirza Kāmrān; (iii) Sāmbhal was given to Mirza Askari; (iv) every one of the *Amirs* also received an increase of

his *jagir*; (v) According to the *Akbar-Nāmā,* Mirza Suleimān was confirmed in Badakhshān.

At first Kāmrān had been confirmed in his possession of Kabul and Kandahār alone. But not being satisfied, Kāmrān left Kandahār in the possession of Askari, and marched to Hindustan. Humāyun then added Peshāwar and Lamghan to his grant. "But Kāmrān's views were too extensive to be satisfied even with that concession." He soon marched up to and occupied Lahore as well. Humāyun, surrounded as he was with great difficulties, confirmed him in his new acquisition. A *firmān* was accordingly issued, bestowing on Kāmrān the government of Kabul, Kandahār, and the Punjab; "a grant which exalted that prince to the possession of dominions and power nearly equal to his own." Kāmrān, who had a turn for poetry, flattered Humāyun with a few odes and wheedled out of him the rich province of Hisar Fīrūzā as well. This was an important grant, and most welcome to Kāmrān, as it lay nearly on the high-road between his possessions in the Punjab and Delhi. The great blunder in this distribution was leaving the perfidious Kāmrān in charge of the most vital part of Bābur's dominions. By this cession Humāyun was left to govern recent conquests, while he was deprived of the resources by which they had been gained, and by which alone they might have also been retained.

'After arranging the affairs of the State, His Majesty proceeded to Kālinjar, the Rāja of which place expressed his fealty, and ranged himself among the supporters of the throne. In those days, sultan Mahmūd (son of Sultan Sikander Lodi), with the assistance of Baban, Bāyazid, and the Afghan nobles, had raised the standard of opposition, and had taken possession of Jaunpur and its dependencies. Humāyun now marched to subdue him, and having achieved success, he returned victorious to Agra. There he held a great festival, and all the nobles and chiefs were honoured with robes and Arab horses. It is said that 12,000 persons received robes at that feast, and 2,000 of them were presented with outer garments of gold brocade and gilt buttons.'

Though such pomp was not unknown to Bābur, Humāyun's already depleted treasury could ill-afford such extravagance at this moment of crisis, when he had to fight enemies on all sides. Hence there was a repetition of 'the old story of financial breakdown, accompanied by revolution, intrigue, and the dethronement of a dynasty.' Humāyun's lavishness on this occasion was typical of his general extravagance.

'At this time Muhammad Zamān Mirza,...who had originally come from Balkh to seek a refuge with His late Majesty, now set

himself up in opposition, but he was taken prisoner, and was sent as a warning for rebels to the fort of Bayāna, and placed in the custody of Yadgar Taghai. An order was given to deprive him of sight, but the servants of Yadgar Beg saved the pupils of his eyes from the effects of the operation. After a short time he made his escape, and fled to Sultan Bahādur of Gujarat. About the same time Muhammad Sultan Mirza, with his two sons Ulugh Mirza, and Shāh Mirza, went off to Kanauj, and there raised a rebellion.

The Gujarat Campaign:

'His Majesty sent a person with letters to Sultan Bahādur of Gujarat demanding the surrender of Muhammad Zamān Mirza, to which he returned a haughty refusal, and then showed signs of rebellion and resistance. This excited the anger of the Emperor, and he resolved to march against Gujarat and chastise Sultan Bahādur. He proceeded to Gwalior and there passed two months in making excursions and hunting' (1532). When Humāyun finally marched against Bahādur Shāh, that prince was busy with the siege of Chitor (1534). At the approach of the Emperor he held a council of war. 'Many officers advised the raising of the siege, but Sadr Khān, who was the chief of the nobles, observed that they were warring against infidels, and that if a sovereign of Musalmans were to attack them while so engaged, he would in effect assist the infidels, and this would remain a reproach against him among Musalmans until the Day of Judgment. He therefore advised the continuance of the siege, and would not believe that the Emperor would attack them. When the Emperor had passed through Mālwa and had come to Sārangpur, he was informed of this; so he rested there.' This was Humāyun's next great blunder. It was a double failing: timely assistance might have won over the Rāṇa as a perpetual ally who might have acted as a bulwark against Gujarat; if attacked at once, Bahādur Shāh might perhaps have been crushed at the first blow. But as it happened, 'Sultan Bahādur carried on the siege of Chitor at his ease, and finally took it by storm, and secured an immense booty. In celebration of the victory, he gave a great feast, and divided the spoil among his soldiers. Then he turned his front to the Imperial army.' Humāyun, hearing of this, marched against Bahādur Shāh and met him at Mandasor. The King of Gujarat again called a council of war. Sadr Khān advised giving battle, but Rūmi Khān who commanded the artillery, counselled entrenchment so as to give full play to his guns (*top*) and rockets (*tufang*).

'They were very strong in artillery, and except the Emperor of Rūm, no other potentate could equal them. Sultan Bahādur acquiesced in this view, and ordered an entrenchment to be formed round his camp. For two months Humāyun did nothing but cut off the supplies of the enemy. Famine ensued in the enemy's camp. The horses and animals and many men perished from want, and the army was dismounted. When Sultan Bahādur perceived that if he remained longer he would be taken prisoner, he went off by the rear of the pavilion and went towards Māndu with five of his most trusty adherents......When his men heard of his escape, they took to flight.

'Humāyun pursued Bahādur Shāh to Māndu and besieged the fort. Sultan Bahādur was asleep when the alarm was raised. A general panic followed and the Gujaratis took to flight. Sultan Bahādur made off with five or six horsemen towards Gujarat......... He had much treasure and many jewels in the fort of Champaner and these he carried off to Ahmedābad. (He set fire to the town before leaving Champaner.) Humāyun pursued him up to Cambay. On his way he took Ahmedābad, which being plundered yielded enormous spoil.' Bahādur Shāh ultimately escaped to the island of Diu. Humāyun, instead of following up his success and finishing with the fugitive, marched to Champaner.

This important fortress occupies the upper part of a hill that rises towering out of the level plain, in the south-east portion of Gujarat, and is visible over a great part of that province. The fortress is surrounded on several of its sides by steep and nearly perpendicular rocks which have gained for it the reputation of being impregnable to active operation. It had an upper and a lower fort, the one rising above the other; while the extensive, and at the same time magnificent town of Muhammadābad extended on one side along its base. Humāyun invested it vainly for four months but finally took it in the manner described below. The great strength of this place, the numerous garrison, and the boldness and success of the enterprise by which its capture was achieved, says Ferishta, 'render this action equal in the opinion of military men, to anything of the kind recorded in history.'

Champaner was no doubt taken (1535-6), Humāyun himself with Bairām Khān scaling the fort at night on its most abrupt side, with the help of steel spikes driven into the scarp of the rock. 'Great numbers of the garrison were slain, and many of their wives and children cast themselves down from the walls of the fort and were killed.' Ikhtiyār Khān who held a high position among the Gujaratis, was kindly received by the Emperor, who made him one of his personal attendants. He was a man of great knowledge and experience, and had a great reputation as a statesman, an accomplished

geometrician and astronomer. He was also of some repute as a poet. When the fort was taken, the place where Bahādur Shāh had hidden his treasure was known only to one officer. Humāyun instead of getting the secret out of him by torture, preferred to make use of wine: the man was invited to an entertainment; and 'when his heart was softened by kindness and warmed with good cheer,' he revealed the secret. The treasure was found in a vault under the bed of a reservoir. 'The gold was divided among the soldiers,—so much a head. The goods and stuffs of Rūm, Europe, and China, and of every part of the world, which the kings of Gujarat had treasured, all fell a prey to the victors. So vast was the amount of gold and effects that came into the possession of the soldiers that no person attempted to collect revenue that year in Gujarat.'

After this, there was a slight rally at Ahmedābad in favour of Bahādur Shāh. But Mirza Askari who was at Muhammadābad won over them an easy victory. 'More than two thousand men were killed in the battle. The Emperor bestowed Ahmedābad and its dependencies upon Mirza Askari in *jagir*, Pātan upon Mirza Yadgar Nāsir, and Broach upon Mirza Hindu Beg. Tardi Beg received Champaner, and Kāsim Hussain obtained Baroda. Khān Jahān Shirāzi and other nobles also received grants. Humāyun proceeded after these successes to Burhānpur, and thence to Māndu.

In this state of affairs according to Ferishta, Buhrān Nizām Shāh, Imād Shāh, and the other sovereigns of the Deccan, apprehensive of his designs wrote submissive letters, tendering their allegiance. Humāyun had scarcely obtained their flattering tokens of his success, when accounts arrived of the insurrection created in the north by Sher Khān.

'Mālwa and Gujarat—two provinces equal in area to all the rest of Humāyun's kingdom—had fallen like ripe fruit into his hands. Never was conquest so easy. Never, too, was conquest more recklessly squandered away.' 'The Emperor Humāyun,' says Nazām-ud-dīn Ahmad, 'remained for a year at Agra and took his pleasure.' Meanwhile, both Gujarat and Mālwa were rapidly lost (1535-1536).

'One night Mirza Askari in a convivial party took too much wine, and giving license to his tongue, exclaimed, "I am a King, and the shadow of God." Just at this period Hindu Beg had counselled Mirza Askari to have the *khutbah* recited and coin struck in his name, and set up his claim to independence expecting that the troops in hopes (of reward) would devote themselves to his service. Mirza Askari did not accept this advice; but Tardi Beg, . . . sent a messenger to Humāyun, to inform him that Mirza Askari had hostile intentions, and was about to march upon Agra and proclaim himself King.'

Ahmedābad and other places revolted in favour of Bahādur Shāh, who soon returned from Diu with Portuguese aid, and recovered all his lost dominions. 'Mirza Askari and the *Amirs* mounted and made a show of fighting, and then retired......But before Mirza Askari retreated from Ahmedābad, the news-writers and reporters had communicated to the Emperor the proposition which Mirza Hindu Beg had made to the Mirza for his assuming the crown, and although he had not assented thereto, they reported that he entertained hostile designs' (1535-36).

Humāyun left Māndu, and reached Agra before Askari. Although not deceived, he considered it prudent to take no notice of reports. Thus the countries of Mālwa and Gujarat, 'the conquest of which had been obtained by the exertions of so fine an army, were now abandoned without a struggle.' This 'beautiful but unwise clemency' towards his brothers was to prove Humāyun's ruin.

When Sultan Bahādur was defeated, Humāyun had sent away Muhammad Zamān Mirza to Sind, instead of taking better account of him. That pretender laid siege to Lahore, when, on account of trouble in Kandahār, Kāmrān had left the Punjab temporarily. When Muhammad Zamān heard of the Emperor's return to Agra, he again took refuge in Gujarat. Kāmrān meanwhile recovered Kandahār from the Persians who had for some time occupied it.

Nuno d'Cuna, the Portuguese Viceroy, had afforded Bahādur Shāh a force of 500 Europeans in return for allowing them to fortify Diu and important trade concessions. Later, Bahādur Shāh was invited to a conference by the Portuguese in the course of which he fell into the sea and died in 1537, at the age of 30. But Humāyun took no advantage of the death of his intrepid enemy which put Gujarat into disorder.

The Fateful Contest with Sher Khān:

Sher Khān, already mentioned as one of the important leaders of the Afghan revolt against the Mughals, had made himself master of the province of South Bihar, by the end of 1531, and occupied the important stronghold of Chunar (near Benares).

The fort of Chunar stands on a rock close to the Ganges, and is, as it were, a detached portion of the Vindhya Mountains which extend to the same river near Mirzāpur. From that neighbourhood the hills recede westwards, by the Fort of Rohtas and Shirghari, and do not approach the river again, until near Bhāgalpur, after which they run straight south, leaving the Ganges at a great distance. These hills, therefore, covered the whole of the south-west of Bihar and Bengal, and shut up the road along the south bank of the Ganges, in two

places—one near Chunar and the other at Sicragalli, east of Bhāgalpur. The hills themselves are not high, but poor and covered with woods. 'As Humāyun marched along the Ganges and made use of that river to convey his guns and stores, it was necessary for him to begin with the siege of Chunar'.

Humāyun, before marching south against Bahādur Shāh, but after the defeat of Mahmūd Lodi at Dauroh, encountered Sher Khān for the first time. The *Tarikh-i-Sher-Shāhi* of Abbās Khān gives the following account of this event :—

'When Humāyun had overcome Sultan Mahmūd, and had put the greater number of his opponents to death, he sent Hindu Beg to take Chunar from Sher Khān, but Sher Khān declined to give it up to him. When he heard this, Humāyun commanded his victorious standards to be set in motion towards Chunar......The army of Humāyun besieged Chunar......Sher Khān knew that the Emperor would be unable to delay long in those parts, for his spies brought him word that Bahādur Shāh, the King of Gujarat, had conquered the kingdom of Māndu and was meditating the seizure of Delhi and would shortly declare war. Humāyun also having received this intelligence, Sher Khān sent his *vakil* to him and wrote saying, "I am your slave, and the client of Junaid Barlas......As you must entrust the fort of Chunar to some one, make it over to me, and I will send my son Kutb Khān to accompany you in this expedition. Do you lay aside all anxiety as regards these parts; for if either I or any other Afghan do any act unbefitting or disloyal, you have my son with you; inflict on him such reprisals as may be a warning to others." When Sher Khān's emissary represented this to the Emperor Humāyun, he replied, "I will give Chunar to Sher Khān, but on this condition, that he sends Jalāl Khān with me." Finally, when Humāyun heard of Mirza Muhammad Zamān's escape from Bayāna, and Bahādur Shāh's intended march on Delhi, he agreed to Sher Khān's proposal. Sher Khān was delighted and sent Kutb Khān, his son, and Isā Khān his chamberlain, to the Emperor, who set off to Agra, and employed himself in suppressing the rebellion of Sultan Bahādur.'

Sher Khān took advantage of this opportunity, and did not leave a single enemy of his remaining throughout the kingdom of Bihar. When the Emperor came back from Gujarat, the Khān-Khānan Yusuf-Khail (who brought the Emperor Bābur from Kabul to Hindustan) said to him: "It is not wise to neglect Sher Khān, for he is rebelliously inclined, and well understands all matters pertaining to government; moreover, all the Afghans are collected round him." But Humāyun, relying on the vastness of his forces, took no heed of Sher Khān, and remaining for the rainy season at Agra, sent Hindu Beg to Jaunpur, with directions to write a full and true report regarding Sher Khān.

'When Sher Khan heard that the Emperor Humāyun intended himself marching towards Bihar, he sent magnificent presents to Hindu Beg, Governor of Jaunpur, and gained his good-will. At the same time Sher Khān wrote thus:

"From what I promised I have not departed. I have not invaded the Emperor's country. Kindly write to the Emperor, and assuring him of my loyalty, dissuade him from marching in this direction; for I am his servant and well-wisher." When Hindu Beg beheld Sher Khān's presents, he approved of them and was well pleased, and he said to the *vakil*, "So long as I live let your mind be easy. No one shall injure you." And in the presence of Sher Khān's *vakil* wrote a letter to the Emperor Humāyun saying: "Sher Khān is a loyal servant of Your Majesty, and strikes coin and reads the *khutbah* in your name, and has not transgressed the boundaries of Your Majesty's territory, or done anything since your departure, which could be any cause of annoyance to you." The Emperor on receipt of Hindu Beg's letter, deferred his journey that year. Sher Khān meanwhile detached Jalāl Khān, Khāwas Khān senior, and other chiefs, to conquer Bengal and the city of Gaur. On their entering Bengal, Sultan Mahmūd, unable to oppose them retired to the Fort of Gaur. The Afghans having made themselves masters of the surrounding country, invested and besieged that fortress, before which daily skirmishes took place.'

The following year Humāyun marched towards Bihar and Bengal. When he arrived near Chunar, he consulted his nobles whether he should first take that fortress, or march towards Gaur, which the son of Sher Khān was besieging, but had not yet taken. All his Mughal nobles advised that he should first take Chunar, and then march on Gaur, and it was so determined. But when Chunar fell to Humāyun, Gaur had already been captured by Sher Khān, who also took about the same time the more important fort of Rohtas by stratagem. Sher Khān thanked God and said: "The fort of Chunar is no fort in comparison with this; as that has gone out of my possession, this has come into it. I was not so pleased at the conquest of Gaur as I am at getting possession of Rohtas." By his wrong choice Humāyun committed another great blunder, and walked into the snare that Sher Khān had cleverly laid for him. He had to pay dearly for this initial mistake in strategy. After the fall of Chunar, as was his wont, he indulged in giving a great banquet and in distributing honours and rewards.

Then he halted at Benares, and sent an envoy to Sher Khān with a view to get possession of the country of Bihar. But Sher Khān said to the envoy, "I have captured this fort of Gaur, and have collected about me a very large force of Afghans. If the Emperor will abandon all design upon Bengal, I will surrender Bihar to him, and make it over to whomsoever he will depute, and will agree to the same boundaries of Bengal as existed in Sultan Sikander's time; and I will send all the ensigns of royalty—as the umbrella, throne, etc. to the Emperor, and will yearly send him ten *lacs* of rupees from

Bengal. But let the Emperor return towards Agra." The Emperor, on hearing this became exceedingly glad, and agreed to what Sher Khān proposed. Sher Khān, too, was much delighted, and said, "I will fulfil the terms agreed upon, and will pray day and night to Almighty God that while life lasts no hostility may befall between the Emperor and myself, for I am his dependant and servant."

Three days after this despatch, says the chronicler, the envoy of Sultan Mahmūd, the successor of Nusrat Shāh of Bengal, came into the presence of the Emperor Humāyun, and made the following communication: "The Afghans have seized the Fort of Gaur, but most of the country is yet in my possession: let not Your Majesty trust to Sher Khān's promises, but march towards these parts, and before they have established and strengthened themselves, expel them from the country, and altogether suppress this revolt. I also will join you, and they are not powerful enough to oppose you." As soon as he heard this report of Sultan Mahmūd, the Emperor ordered his victorious standards to be set in motion towards Bengal. There in four days with little difficulty he took possession of Gaur, the capital of Bengal, and drove away all the Afghans. After cleansing and repairing the city, the first act of His Majesty was to divide the province into *jagirs* among his officers; after which he very unaccountably shut himself up in his *harem*, and abandoned himself to every kind of indulgence and luxury. 'When Humāyun entered Gaur,' says Niamatulla, 'Sher Khān had previously fitted up all the mansions of that place with an exquisite variety of ornaments and embellishments, and rendered them a perfect gallery of pictures, by partly-coloured carpets and costly silk-stuffs, in the hope that Humāyun, charmed with it, would be induced to prolong his stay there; and his designs were unexpectedly seconded by fate, for Humāyun remained four months in Gaur, and had no leisure for any other occupation than pleasure and enjoyment. While the King had thus for several months given himself up to pleasure and indolence, information was at length conveyed to him that Sher Khān had killed 700 Mughals, had laid siege to the fortress of Chunar, and taken the city of Benares; and had also sent forward an army along the bank of the Ganges to take Kanauj; that he had further seized the families of several of the officers and sent them prisoners to Rohtas.'

Sher Khān looked upon Humāyun's conduct as a definite betrayal of his previous engagement with himself.

"I have observed all loyalty to the Emperor," he said, "and have committed no offence against him, and have not encroached upon his boundaries.........The Emperor desired the kingdom of Bihar, and I was willing to surrender it. But it is not the right way to govern a kingdom to alienate so large a force (as Sher Khān then possessed) from his service; and in order to please their enemies, to ruin and slay the Afghans. But since the Emperor takes no heed, and has violated his promise,......you will hear what deeds the Afghans will do, and the march to Bengal will end in repentance and regret, for now the Afghans are united, and have laid aside their mutual quarrels and envyings. The country which the Mughals have taken from the Afghans, they got through the internal dissensions among the latter."

As Humāyun did not keep to his word, Sher Khān felt himself free to act as he pleased. Accordingly, he dispatched some of his officers to the west to attack the Empire when Humāyun was away in Bengal. They took Benares and killed the greater part of the Mughal garrison there. Then they proceeded to Bahraich, and drove out the Mughals from those parts, until they arrived at and captured the city of Sāmbhal, and made slaves of the inhabitants and spoiled the city. Another force was sent towards Jaunpur, the governor of which place was killed in battle, and the same force was sent in the direction of Agra. Every governor on the part of the Emperor Humāyun, throughout the whole country, who offered any opposition, was killed, or was defeated and driven out of the country; so that all the districts as far as Kanauj and Sāmbhal fell into the possession of the Afghans. The officers of Sher Khān also collected the revenue of both the autumn and spring harvests of these parts.'

Meanwhile, Mirza Hindāl who had returned to Agra from Humāyun's camp, raised the standard of revolt at the capital, and murdered Sheikh Bahlol who was much respected by Humāyun. 'When the Emperor heard of this defection, he left Jahāngīr Beg in charge of Bengal, with 5,000 chosen men, and set off for Agra. At this time Muhammad Zamān Mirza returned from Gujarat with great contrition, and waited upon the Emperor, who forgave him and did not utter a word of reproach.' Humāyun, however, was not allowed to escape so easily by Sher Khān. Summoning all his forces from Bihar, Jaunpur, and other places he collected them in the environs of the fort of Rohtas. Then he marched to confront the Emperor. Having consulted his nobles, and finding that they all enthusiastically responded, Sher Khān addressed his army thus:

"For two days I have drawn out my army, and have returned to my encampment, that I might put the Emperor off his guard that he might not suspect that my army was coming towards him. Now turn, set your faces towards the army of the Emperor, and *let not the honour of the Afghans out of your grasp nor fail to display your utmost devotion, for now is the time to regain the Empire of Hindustan.*"

Humāyun's brother Kāmrān Mirza, instead of aiding him in this crisis, Ferishta tells us, aspired to the throne, and marched with 10,000 horse from Lahore, giving out that he came to offer assistance. On the arrival of Kāmrān at Delhi, Hindāl Mirza prevailed on him to unite their forces in prosecution of the siege......The princes finding the governor of Delhi refusing to surrender or betray, raised the siege and marched towards Agra. On reaching that city, the jealousy which

the brothers naturally entertained against each other (the eyes of both being turned towards the throne) evinced itself in open war. Hindāl Mirza, being deserted by many of his party, fled to Alwar with 5,000 horse and 300 elephants; while Kāmrān Mirza entering Agra proclaimed himself King.' Yet Humāyun despising the forces of Sher Khān, 'did not even inspect his forces nor pay regard to what is necessary in an engagement; nor did he take into consideration the disorganisation which the climate of Bengal had produced in his army.'

'Sher Khān knew all the devices and stratagems of war, and knew how to commence and conclude an engagement, and had experienced both prosperity and misfortune. The army of the Mughals had not extricated themselves from their camp, before the Afghan army were already upon them, and coming boldly on, attacked the army of the Emperor without hesitation. In the twinkling of an eye, they routed the Mughal forces on 26 June 1539. Humāyun had not completed his ablutions when the intelligence reached him that the Mughals were utterly scattered, so that to rally them was impossible. The confusion in the army was so great that he had no time to remove his family, but fled in the direction of Agra with the intention of collecting all his forces at that place, and returning again from thence to destroy his enemy.' Jauhar, Humāyun's personal attendant, gives the following particulars of the disastrous end of this battle which was fought at Chupāghāt or Chaunsa:—

> 'An archer seated on an elephant discharged an arrow which wounded the King in the arm, and the enemy began to surround him. His Majesty then called to his troops to advance and charge the enemy, but no one obeyed; and the Afghans having succeeded in throwing everything into confusion, one of the King's followers came up, seized his bridle, and said, "There is no time to be lost; when your friends forsake you, flight is the only remedy." The King then proceeded to the bank of the river, and although followed by one of his own elephants, he urged his horse into the stream, but in a short time the horse sank. On seeing this event, a water-carrier, who had distended his leather bag (*masak*) with air offered it to His Majesty, who by means of the bag swam the river. According to the most authentic accounts, 8,000 Mughals exclusive of Hindus, were drowned, during the flight, among whom was the prince Muhammad Zamān Mirza.'

After this victory, Sher Khān assumed the title and insignia of royalty, at the desire of his nobles. He seated himself on the throne, unfolded the umbrella over his head, and assumed the name of Sher Shāh, and struck coin, and caused the *khutbah* to be read in his own name; and he took also the additional title of Shāh Ālam. The coro-

nation, according to Professor Qanungo, took place at Gaur, about the beginning of December 1539.

Meanwhile Humāyun reached Agra. 'Mirza Kāmrān had received no intelligence before the Emperor arrived. The latter repaired at once to the pavilion of his brothers, and on seeing each other, the eyes of the brothers filled with tears. Hindāl Mirza (who had come from Alwar) received pardon for his offences, and then came and waited upon the Emperor. Muhammad Sultān Mirza and his sons also came in and joined them. Consultations were held. Mirza Kāmrān was desirous of returning to Lahore, and showed unbounded expectations. The Emperor assented to all his extraordinary propositions. Khwāja Kalan Beg exerted himself to bring about the return of Mirza Kāmrān. The negotiations went on for six months. Meanwhile, Mirza Kāmrān had been attacked with severe sickness, and some designing persons had instilled into his mind that his illness was the result of poison administered to him by the Emperor's directions. So, ill as he was, he started for Lahore, having sent Khwāja Kalan Beg in advance. He promised to leave a considerable portion of his army to assist his brother at Agra; but in spite of this promise, he carried all off with him, excepting only 2,000 men whom he left at Agra under the command of Sikander.'

Sher Shāh himself pursued the Emperor Humāyun and got possession of the whole country, as far as Kālpi and Kanauj. He sent Isā Khān towards Gujarat and Māndu and to the chiefs of these parts he wrote saying, "I am about to send a son of mine into your neighbourhood. When the Emperor Humāyun moves towards Kanauj, do you accompany my son, and seize and lay waste the country about Agra and Delhi."

'When the Emperor Humāyun heard that Sher Shāh had sent his son towards Chānderi, that he might raise disturbances in those parts, he sent both his brothers, Mirza Hindāl and Mirza Askari, with other nobles in that direction. When the Mālwa chiefs heard that the two brothers of the Emperor were coming to oppose Kutb Khān, they gave him no assistance. Kutb Khān went from Chānderi to the city of Chondha (Kālpi?), and engaging the Mughals at Chondha, was slain. Mirza Hindāl and Mirza Askari having gained this victory, returned to the Emperor. When Sher Shāh heard of this, he was extremely grieved and enraged. The Mughals gained excessive confidence from this victory, and large forces having come also from their own

country, the Emperor Humāyun arrayed his army and came to Kanauj (April 1540). Sher Shāh also fortified himself on the opposite side.'

Battle of Kanauj or Bilgram:

'On the 10th Muharram 947 A. H. both armies drew out their forces.' Sher Shāh ordered each chief to return to his own followers and to remain with them; and he himself went through the army and set it in proper array. Quite in contrast to this was the ineptitude on the side of Humāyan, Mirza Haidar, Bābur's cousin, who was himself one of the commanding officers on the occasion, vividly describes the condition of the Mughal army and the course and result of the battle thus:—

'The Imperial army reached the banks of the Ganges in the best way that it could. There it encamped and lay for about a month, the Emperor being on one side of the river, and Sher Shāh on the other, facing each other. The armies may have amounted to more than 200,000 men. Muhammad Sultan Mirza, who had several times revolted against Humāyun, but being unsuccessful, had sought forgiveness and had been pardoned, now having colluded with Sher Shāh, deserted.

'A new way was thus opened. Everybody began to desert, and the most surprising part of it was, that many of those who deserted did not go over to Sher Shāh, and could expect no favour from him. A heated feeling ran through the army, and the cry was, "Let us go and rest in our own homes." A number also of Kāmrān's auxiliary forces deserted and fled to Lahore...

'As the army had taken to desert, it was judged better to risk a battle, than to see it go to ruin without fighting. If the result was unfavourable, in that case, we could not at least be accused of having abandoned the Empire without striking a blow. We therefore crossed the river. Both armies entrenched themselves. Everyday skirmishes occurred between the adventurous swaggering spirits of both sides. These proceedings were put an end to by the monsoon rains, which came on and flooded the ground, rendering it unfit for camp. To move was indispensable. Opinions were expressed that another such a deluge would sink the whole army in the abyss of despair, and it was decided to move to a rising ground, which the inundation could not reach, and which lay in front of the enemy. I went to reconnoitre, and found a place suitable for the purpose...

'Between me and the river there was a force of 27 *Amirs*, all of whom carried the *tugh* banner....On the day of battle, when Sher Shāh, having formed his divisions, marched out, of all these 27 *tugh* banners, not one was to be seen, for the great nobles had hidden them in the apprehension that the enemy might advance towards them. The soldiership and bravery of these *Amirs* may be conceived from this exhibition of courage. Sher Shāh came out in five divisions of 1000 men each, and in advance of him were 3000 men. I estimated the whole as being less than 15,000, but I calculated the Chaghatai force as about 40,000, all mounted on tipchak horses, and clad in iron armour.

They surged like the waves of the sea, but the courage of the *Amirs* and officers of the army was such as I have described.

'Every *Amir* and *Wazir* in the Chaghatai army, whether he be rich or poor, has his *ghulāms*. An *Amir* of note with his 100 retainers and followers has 500 servants and *ghulāms*, who in the day of battle render no assistance to their master and have no control over themselves. So in whatsoever place there was conflict, the *ghulāms* were entirely ungovernable. When they lost their master, they were seized with panic, and blindly rushed about in terror. In short, it was impossible to hold our ground. They so pressed upon us in the rear, that they drove the centre upon the chains stretched between the gun-carriages, and they and the soldiers dashed each other upon them. Such was the state of the centre.

'On the right, Sher Shāh advanced in battle array; but before an arrow was discharged, the camp-followers fled like chaff before the wind, and breaking the line, they all pressed towards the centre.

'The chaghatais were defeated in this battle-field where not a man, either friend or foe, was wounded; not a gun was fired; and the chariots were useless. The Emperor fled to Agra; and when the enemy approached that city, he made no delay but went to Lahore.

Sher Shāh having sent two of his best officers to besiege Gwalior and Sāmbhal, and 'speedily settled the country about Kanauj, betook himself in the direction of Agra. When Sher Shāh approached Agra, the Emperor, unable to remain there, fled towards Lahore. Sher Shāh was greatly displeased at this,... and on his arrival at Agra, remained there, for some days himself, but sent Khāwas Khān and Barmazid Gur in the direction of Lahore, with a large Afghan force to pursue the Emperor... But the Emperor and Mirza Kāmrān quitted Lahore, which was shortly afterwards occupied by Sher Shāh, who however, made no halt there. On the third march beyond Lahore, he heard that Mirza Kāmrān had gone by way of the Judh hills to Kābul, and that the Emperor Humāyun was marching along the banks of the Indus to Multan and Bhakkar. The King went to Khushab and thence despatched Khāwas Khān...and the greater part of the army, in pursuit of the Emperor, towards Multan. He instructed them not to engage the Emperor, but to drive him beyond the borders of the Kingdom, and then to return.'

Here we must slightly retrace our steps to recount Humāyun's last pathetic efforts to win the co-operation of his ungrateful brothers. 'At the beginning of Rabiu-l awwal all the Chaghatai Sultans and *Amirs* were assembled in Lahore; but Mirza Muhammad Sultan and his sons, who had come to Lahore, fled from thence to Multan. Mirza Hindāl and Mirza Yaḍgar Nāsir found it expedient to go towards

Bhakkar and Thatta, and Mirza Kāmrān determined to go to Kabul as soon as the party was broken up.

'It was abundantly manifest to the Emperor that there was no possibility of bringing his brothers and *Amirs* to any common agreement, and he was very despondent.' Ferishta says, 'Humāyun used every possible argument with his brothers to effect a coalition of interest against Sher Shāh telling them that their intestine feud must end in their losing that mighty Empire which had cost their father so much pains to acquire; that their conduct would involve the house of Timūr in one common ruin; and that no remedy existed but to reunite against the common enemy, and afterwards to divide the Empire amongst themselves. These arguments had no weight with the King's brothers, who, blinded by ambition, determined rather to lose all than to be content with a part.'

'Mirza Haidar Beg after much consultation had been sent off with a party who had volunteered for service in Kashmir, and Khwāja Kalan Beg was ordered to follow him. When the Mirza had reached Naushahr, and Kalan Beg had got as far as Sialkot, intelligence reached the Emperor that Sher Shāh had crossed the river (Beas) at Sultānpūr, and was only a few *kos* distant. His Majesty then passed over the river of Lahore.

'Mirza Kāmrān, after proving faithless to the oaths and compacts which he had made to help in whatever was decided upon, now thought it expedient to retire with the Emperor to Bahrah. When Khwāja Kalan Beg heard of this, he marched rapidly from Sialkot, and joined the camp of Humāyun. At Bahrah, Mirza Kāmrān and Mirza Askari parted from Humāyun, and went off accompanied by Khwāja Kalan Beg to Kabul.' This was towards the end of October, 1546.

Humāyun in Exile:

In the Desert: 'Mirza Hindāl and Mirza Yadgar Nāsir still remained with Humāyun. They wandered about from place to place, Rohri, Bhakkar, Patar—and sought refuge in vain from Shāh Husain Arghūn, ruler of Thatta, with a view to '*attempt the recovery of Gujarat.*' Grain becoming scarce at Bhakkar, the Emperor marched off to Patar, where Mirza Hindāl was staying, for he had heard that Mirza Hindāl intended to go to Kandahār. It was here, in the camp of Hindāl at Patar, that Humāyun fell in love with Maryam-i Makāni Hamidā Bānu Begam (who soon became mother of Akbar), in the summer of 1541. Nizām-ud-dīn says, he spent several days of happiness

and pleasure in the camp of Hindāl. The Emperor forbade Hindāl to go to Kandahār, but he did not obey. When Humāyun was informed of it, he was much troubled by the want of union, among his brothers. Then the conquest of Thatta was thought of. When the Emperor marched for Thatta, a large body of soldiers parted from him and stayed at Bhakkar. He made a vain attempt to capture the fort of Sehwān, and retired to Bhakkar. Mirza Yadgar Nāsir proved treacherous and helped the enemy to harass Humāyun. In this extremity he resolved upon marching to Maldeo 'one of the faithful *zamindars* of Hindustan, who at that time surpassed all the *zamindars* of Hindustan in power and in the number of his forces.' Maldeo had sent letters to Bhakkar, declaring his loyalty, and offering assistance in effecting the subjugation of Hindustan. Humāyun, accordingly, marched towards Maldeo's country by way of Jesalmir.

But when Maldeo was informed of the Emperor's weakness he was much alarmed, for he knew that he had not sufficient forces of his own to withstand Sher Shāh. For Sher Shāh had sent an ambassador to Maldeo, holding out great expectations, and the latter had promised to make Humāyun a prisoner if possible, and to give him over into the hands of his enemy. Nagaur and its dependencies had fallen into the power of Sher Shāh, and consequently he was afraid lest Sher Shāh should be annoyed, and send a large army into his territory against Humāyun. But luckily, one of the Emperor's librarians, who at the time of his defeat had fled to Maldeo, now wrote to Humāyun informing him that Maldeo was bent upon treachery, and advising him to get out of his territory as quickly as possible. So Humāyun marched off at once to Amarkot.

'At length, with extreme toil, they reached Amarkot, which is 100 *kos* distant from Thatta. The Rāṇa of Amarkot was kindly disposed, and came out to meet the Emperor, and offered his services. The army rested from their hardships some days in the city, and whatsoever the Emperor had in his treasury he distributed among his soldiers. Fortune now for a time changed its treatment of the Emperor, by giving him a son, and impressing an imperishable mark upon the page of time. The child was born on the 5th Rajab, 949 A. H., 15 October 1542, and the Emperor under spiritual guidance gave to the child the name of Jalāl-ud-dīn Muhammad Akbar.'

"Three years had elapsed since his first arrival in Sind, of which 18 months had been occupied in his negotiations and military attempts in that country; 6 months were spent in his journeys to the eastward of the Indus, and a year in his residence at Jūn (a branch of the Indus, half way between Thatta and Amarkot) and his journey to Kandahar."

About July 1543, 'His Majesty, seeing that it was not advisable to remain longer in this country, determined upon going to Kandahār.' At this time Bairām Khān, who later became famous as Akbar's guardian, rejoined him; he had sought refuge in Gujarat after Humāyun's defeat at Kanauj, and after some adventures found the way back to his master. But Humāyun's enemies still dogged his footsteps. Shāh Husain of Thatta informed Mirzas Askari and Kāmrān about his movements, and those ungrateful wretches 'wrote back desiring him to bar his progress and make him prisoner. Humāyun only said: "What is the worth of Kandahār and Kabul that I should strive with my faithless brothers?" Leaving the young Prince Akbar, who was only a year old, at Kandahār, in the charge of a small party, Humāyun accompanied by Bairām Khān, and a few others, 'set off even without determining the route.'

In Persia: 'The hostile proceedings of his brothers made these parts no safe place for His Majesty; so he proceeded onwards towards Khurāsan and Irāq.' Upon entering Sistan, Ahmad Sultan Shamlu, governor of that province under Shāh Tahmasp, received him with great kindness. Thence, he proceeded to Herat, 'because he had heard great praise of the city,' and was equally well received. 'He received all that he could require, and lacked nothing until the time of his meeting Shāh Tahmasp. All the palaces and gardens of Herat are beautiful to see, and His Majesty visited them, after which he took his departure for Meshed and Tus.' Under the orders of the Shāh, every governor on the route supplied him with all things he required. At length he reached Pulak Surlik and had an interview with Shāh Tahmasp, who entertained him and showed every honour and distinction worthy of both host and guest. He obtained from the Shāh a force of 14,000 men, with whom he marched towards Kandahār. In return Humāyun promised to establish the *Shiah* faith in his dominions, when he reacquired them, and to hand over Kandahār to the Persians.

Reconquest of Hindustan:

At this time, Kāmrān was in possession of Kabul, Hindāl of Ghazni, and Askari of Kandahār. Kāmrān had also taken Badakhshān, or South Bactria, from Suleimān Mirza who had been placed there by Bābur: North Bactria, including Balkh, was in the hands of the Uzbegs. Sher Shāh was still alive, and therefore there was little to be hoped from an invasion of Hindustan.

'When they reached the fort of Garmsir, they took possession of the Garmsir territories. On arriving at Kandahār, a large body of men sallied out of the fort, and made what resistance they could, but were defeated. The siege of Kandahār went on for three months'. Bairām Khān was sent to Kabul on an embassy to Kāmrān Mirza. There he had interviews with Kāmrān, Hindāl, and others. Kāmrān sent his envoy 'to settle terms of peace if possible'. But Mirza Askari was still intent upon fighting and holding out. The Persian forces were tired at the long duration of the siege of Kandahār, and had even thoughts of returning. But when many of the great *Begs* rallied round the Emperor, Askari lost heart and proposed to surrender. 'The Emperor in his great kindness granted him terms.'

'It had been agreed with the Persians that as soon as Kandahār was taken it should be given up to them, and now the Emperor gave them possession of it, although he possessed no other territory......Mirza Askari having found an opportunity made his escape; but a party being sent in pursuit he was caught and brought back. His Majesty then placed him in confinement. The chiefs of the Chaghatai tribes now met in council, and resolved that under the necessities of the case, the fort of Kandahār must be taken from the Persians, and should be given up to them again after the reconquest of Kabul and Badakhshān. They entered the fort, and the Persians were over-powered. Humāyun mounted his horse and went into the city......The Chaghatais to their great satisfaction thus obtained possession of Kandahār' (September 1545).

"The cession of Kandahār to the Persians was the price of the assistance of the Shāh," observes Elphinstone, "and by availing himself of that assistance......he ratified the engagement anew; and his infraction of it, especially with the concomitant circumstances, must leave him under the stigma of treachery." After this, Humāyun marched to effect the conquest of Kabul, and left Bairām Khān in charge of Kandahār.

'Mirza Kāmrān who had a well-equipped army, marched out with the intention of fighting; but every night parties of men deserted his army and joined Humāyun. Mirza Kāmrān, being alarmed, sent a party of Sheikhs to wait upon the Emperor and ask forgiveness. The Emperor agreed to pardon him, on condition of his coming in and making his submission. Kāmrān did not agree to this, but fled and shut himself up in the citadel of Kabul. All his forces came over to the side of the Emperor. On the same night Kāmrān fled to Ghazni. The Emperor then entered Kabul (15 November 1545), and at night the citizens, in the extreme of joy, illuminated the whole city with lamps. On his entering the palace, Her Highness the Begam brought the young Prince Jalāl-ud-dīn Muhammad Akbar to his father's presence. This sight lighted up the heart of the Emperor with joy, and he offered up his thanks-givings for the reunion. The victory was accomplished on the 10th Ramzān 953 A.H., when the Prince was 4 years, 2 months, and 5 days old. The remainder of that year the Emperor spent in enjoyment at Kabul.'

In the following year, Humāyun marched to Badakhshān, for

Mirza Suleimān had disregarded the summons to come in and make his submission. Mirza Suleimān was defeated and put to flight. When Humāyun was away in Badakhshān, Kāmrān, by a surprise attack, took possession of Kabul and Ghazni. Hearing of this, the Emperor turned towards Kabul, having put Suleimān again in charge of Badakhshān and Kunduz. Kāmrān had taken possession of Prince Akbar, and in the fight that ensued, he made good use of this possession. 'With dastardly feeling,' writes our historian, 'he ordered that His Highness the young Prince Akbar should be exposed upon the battlements, in the place where the balls and shot of the guns and muskets fell thickest. But Maham Anka took the child in her bosom, put herself forward, and held him towards the enemy (*i.e.*, the garrison) and God Almighty preserved him.' Kāmrān's spirit fell, and, from all parts and quarters men came in to render assistance to the Emperor. Reinforcements came from Badakhshān and Kandahār.

Mirza Kāmrān now sued for peace, and the Emperor granted it, upon condition of his personal submission. But he was afraid to do this, and sought to make his escape. After some scrapes and adventures he sought refuge in Badakhshān. In vain he tried to get help from the Uzbegs, and when he failed in this, being very much downcast, affected repentance and expressed his desire to go to Mecca. The Emperor once more pardoned him (April 1547). 'When they met, he displayed the greatest kindness to Kāmrān, who again received the ensigns of sovereignty. Three days they remained in the same place, and feasts and rejoicings went on. After some days, he gave the country of Kolab as an *ikta* to Kāmrān. In June 1548, Humāyun left Kābul, with the intention of proceeding against Balkh, and summoned Kāmrān and Askari. Though Hindāl joined him, Kāmrān and Askari once more showed hostility, and did not come to pay their homage.

Kāmrān had married a daughter of Shāh Husain Arghūn of Sind. When Humāyun dislodged him again, he sought help from his father-in-law, and made a fresh attempt on Kābul. In the course of this fight Hindāl met his death—19 November 1551. Finally, Kāmrān sought refuge with Sultan Salim Shāh Sūr in Hindustan; but disgusted with the treatment he received there, he fled to the hills of Sialkot. Here he fell into the hands of Sultan Ahmad Gakkar, who sent him as captive to Humāyun. 'The Emperor in his natural humanity was ready to overlook the offences of Kāmrān, but the officers and chiefs

of the Chaghatai clans, who had suffered many things owing to Kāmrān's hostility, having agreed together, went to Humāyun, and stated that the security of the Chaghatai clans and people depended on the destruction of Kāmrān Mirza, for they had repeatedly experienced the effects of his hostility. Humāyun had no escape but by consenting that he should be blinded.'

After a time the intelligence came from India of the death of Sultan Salim Sūr, and of the dissensions among the Afghans. In November 1554, the Emperor began his march. When the army encamped at Peshāwar, Bairām Khān, according to orders, came up from Kandahār, and the royal standards passed over the river Indus on the last day of that year. The governor of New Rohtas, although that fort had been strengthened, made no resistance, and fled...Humāyun continued his march towards Lahore, and when the Afghans of that city became aware of the near advance of his army, they took to flight. He entered Lahore without opposition (24 February 1555), and then sent on the nobles in command of the advance to Jalandhar and Sirhind. The districts of the Punjab, Sirhind, and Hisar, all came without a struggle into the hands of the Chāghatai forces. A body of Afghans, assembled at Dipālpur, were defeated, and their baggage and their wives and families became the prey of the victors.

'Sikander Afghan, who held possession of Delhi, sent 30,000 men under Tatar Khān and Haibat Khān to attack the advance forces in Sirhind. The Chaghatai forces concentrated at Jalandhar, and for all the numbers of the enemy and their own paucity they were ready to fight. They advanced and crossed the Sutlej......As the sun went down a great battle began.

Battle of Machiwārā: 'The Afghans began the battle with their archers, but as it was getting dark, the arrows took little effect on the Mughals, but the Afghans being greatly annoyed by the fire (*atashi*) threw themselves into a neighbouring village. As most of the houses in the villages of Hindustan are thatched, a fire broke out, and lighting up the field of battle, the (Mughal) archers came out and plied their weapons heartily by the light of the burning village. The enemy in the glare of the fire, presented a fine mark for their shafts, and being unable to endure longer, took to flight.'

A great victory was gained, and elephants and much spoil fell into the hands of the victors. When the news of the victory reached Lahore, the Emperor was greatly delighted, and showed great honour to his generals. All the Punjab, Sirhind, and Hisar-Fīrūza were now in his possession, and some of the dependencies of Delhi also were in the hands of the Mughals.

Battle of Sirhind: 'On hearing of this defeat, (Sultan) Sikander Afghan marched forth to take his revenge, with 80,000 horsemen and elephants and artillery. He marched to Sirhind and there he entrenched and fortified his camp. The Chaghatai generals strengthened the fortifications of Sirhind, and making a good show of resistance, they wrote letters to Humāyun for reinforcements. Thereupon he sent Prince Akbar towards Sirhind, and as he approached, the generals came out to meet him. The forces were drawn out in array with the greatest show against the enemy, who were four times more numerous than the Mughals.

'For some days the daring spirits in both armies challenged each other to combat and displayed their valour, till at length the vanguard of Prince Akbar was drawn up for battle. A second division under Bairām Khān (*Khān-Khānan*) on the one side, and on the other a third division under Iskandar Khān......attacked the enemy. In the engagement all the nobles exhibited dauntless courage and the most determined resolution. The Afghans, 100,000 in number, were defeated, being inferior in courage, and (Sultan) Sikander fled.

'The victors pursued the enemy and put many of them to death; and having secured an enormous booty, returned triumphant to wait upon the Emperor and congratulate him. Under his orders a despatch of the victory was drawn, in which the honour of the victory was ascribed to Prince Akbar and this was circulated in all directions.'

'*This victory,*' says Ferishta, '*decided the fate of the Empire: and the kingdom of Delhi fell forever from the hands of the Afghans.*'

Sikander Khān Uzbeg was then sent on to Delhi, and the royal camp was moved to Samana. A body of Afghans in Delhi made their escape in hot haste, and Sikander Uzbeg entered and occupied the city. Mir Abdul Ma'ali was sent to Lahore to keep in check Sultan Sikander, who had fled into the Siwālik mountains. 'In the month of Ramzān (23 July 1555) the Emperor entered Delhi, and once more the *khutbah* was read, and the coins were stamped with his name in the territories of Hindustan. The chiefs who had taken part in the campaign were most liberally rewarded, and each one was made the ruler of a province. The remainder of this year was spent in ease and enjoyment.'

From the time when Humāyun arrived in Delhi, says Erskine, "he devoted himself to a general superintendence of the affairs of his kingdom, and to watching the progress of his armies which he had sent in various directions to reduce different provinces. He saw clearly that there were great defects in the system of government of the Empire, and set himself to devising means of improving it. The plan which he projected was to separate the Empire into several great divisions, each of them to have a local capital, and a board of administration for directing local affairs. Delhi, Agra, Kanauj, Jaunpur, Māndu,

and Lahore were among the capitals fixed upon. To each of them was to be assigned a considerable military force, under an able general so as to render it independent of assistance from the others ; while the Emperor was to give unity to the whole, by visiting them in turn with an army of about 12,000 horse, which were to be under his own immediate command, and at all times ready to move in any direction. This plan, however, he never had time, had he even possessed sufficient steadiness, to carry into execution."

Death of Humāyun:

'But now, the most extraordinary event occurred. On the 8th Rabi-ul awwal, at sunset, the Emperor ascended to the top of the library, and there stood for a short time. As he was descending, the *muazzin* cried aloud the summons to prayer, and he reverently sat down on the second step. When he was getting up again, his foot slipped, and he fell from the stairs to the ground. The people in attendance were greatly shocked, and the Emperor was taken up senseless, and carried into the palace. After a short time he rallied and spake. The Court physicians exerted all their powers but in vain. Next day he grew worse, and his case was beyond medical help. Sheikh Juli was sent to the Punjāb to summon Prince Akbar. On the 15th Rabiul awwal, 963 A. H. (24 January 1556), at the setting of the sun, he left this world for paradise. The date of his death is given in the line: *Humāyun bādshāh az bam uftad.*'

By a strange presentiment, as it were, some time before his death Humāyun used to repeat with deep emotion, and tears gushing from his eyes, the following mystical verses, 'which he had heard from a supernatural voice' :—

"O Lord, of Thine infinite goodness make me Thine own;
Make me a partner of the knowledge of Thy attributes;
I am broken-hearted from the cares and sorrows of life;
O call to Thee Thy poor Madman (lover)
O grant me my release!"

Humāyun's Character :

Nizām-ud-dīn Ahmad, whose narrative we have mainly followed for the life of Humāyun, concludes his account of him with the following estimate of Humāyun's character :

His angelic character was adorned with every manly virtue, and in courage and heroism he excelled all the princes of his time. All the wealth of Hindustan would not have sufficed to maintain his generosity. In the sciences of astrology

and mathematics he was unrivalled. He made good verses, and all the learned and great and good of the time were admitted to his society and passed the night in his company. Great decorum was observed in his receptions, and all learned discussions were conducted in the most orderly manner. The light of favour shone upon men of ability and worth, during his reign. Such was his clemency that he repeatedly pardoned the crimes of Mirza Kāmrān and the Chaghatai nobles, when they were taken prisoners and were in his power. He was particular about his ablutions and never allowed the name of God to pass from his tongue until he had performed them.

But among the contemporary estimates of Humāyun, that of his uncle Mirza Haidar will be always considered the most valuable for its intimacy as well as truthfulness. For, 'No one of my brothers or Sultans of the time, who had been in the Emperor's service,' he writes, 'had ever been honoured in such a way as I, Muhammad Haidar Kurkān, was, who being the approved friend of such a Prince as the Emperor, was not only called "brother" but was chosen as "*dast*".

'Humāyun Pādshāh was the eldest, greatest and most renowned of Bābur's sons. I have seen few persons possessed of so much natural talent and excellence as he; but in consequence of frequent intercourse with the sensual and profligate men who served him, he had contracted some bad habits; among these was his addiction to opium. All the evils that have been set down to the Emperor, and become the common talk of the people, are attributable to this vice. Nevertheless he was endowed with excellent qualities being brave in battle, gay in feast, and very generous. In short, he was a dignified stately sovereign, who observed much state and pomp. When I entered his service at Agra, it was after his defeats, and people said that, compared with what had been, there was nothing left of his pomp and magnificence. Yet, when his army was arrayed for the Ganges campaign (in which the whole direction devolved on me), there were still 17,000 menials in his retinue, from which circumstance an estimate may be formed of the rest of his establishment.'

Ferishta says, 'Humāyun was of elegant stature, and of a bronze complexion. The mildness and benevolence of Humāyun's character were excessive, if there can be excess in such noble qualities. He was a prince of great intrepidity, and possessed the virtues of charity and munificence in a very high degree. He was skilled in the science of geography, and delighted in the company of learned men. He was regular in his devotions and ablutions and never pronounced the name of God without having performed the latter ceremony. Humāyun was a prince as remarkable for his wit as for the urbanity of his manners; and for the most part, disposed to spend his time in social intercourse and pleasure. He devoted himself, however, to the sciences of astronomy and geography; and not only wrote dissertations on the

nature of the elements, but had terrestrial and celestial globes constructed for his use.

He caused seven halls of audience to be built, in which he received persons according to their rank. The first, called the *Palace of the Moon*, was set apart for ambassadors, messengers and travellers. In the second, called the *Palace of Venus*, civil officers and persons of that description, were received; and there were five other palaces for the remaining five planets. In each of these buildings he gave public audience, according to the planet of the day. The furniture and paintings of each, as also the dresses of the house-hold attendants, bore some symbol emblematic of the planet. In each of these palaces he transacted business for one day in the week.

Havell writes, "Like Bābur his education and tastes were entirely Persian,...but while Timūr and Bābur were strong individualists and men of action, never allowing themselves to be turned from any set purpose, either from the preaching of a *mulla* or the prognostications of a sooth-sayer, Humāyun was but a weak dilettante who sought the advice of the court astrologers in all state affairs....In spite of these precautions the stars in their courses fought against Humāyun...He was never wanting in personal courage, but the restoration of the Mughal dynasty was more due to the steadfast loyalty of his comrades and to the weakness of Sher Shāh's descendants, than to his own military capacity. The contrast between Sher Shāh and Humāyun could not be better illustrated than it is in the two great monuments which perpetuate their memory. Humāyun's mausoleum at Delhi portrays in its polished elegance the facile *chermeur* and rather superficial dilettante of the Persian school, whose best title to fame is that he was the father of Akbar; Sher Shāh's at Sahserām, the stern strong man, egotist and empire-builder who trampled all his enemies under foot, and ruled Hindustan with a rod of iron."

Elphinstone thought, "Though not deficient in intelligence, he had little energy; and though free from vices and violent passions, he was no less devoid of principles and affections. By nature he was more inclined to ease than ambition; yet as he had been brought up under Bābur, and accustomed to bodily and mental exertion, he never was wanting to the exigencies of his situation, or quite lost the advantages of his birth and pretensions, though he never turned them to the best account......He was not naturally either cunning or cruel; and if he had been a limited monarch in Europe, he would most likely not have been more treacherous or bloody than Charles II."

Malleson says, "Brave, genial, witty, a charming companion, highly educated, generous, and merciful, Humāyun was even less

qualified than his father to found a dynasty on principles which should endure. Allied to his many virtues were many compromising defects. He was volatile, thoughtless, and unsteady. He was swayed by no strong sense of duty. His generosity was apt to degenerate into prodigality; his attachments into weakness. He was unable to concentrate his energies for a time in any serious direction, whilst for comprehensive legislation he had neither the genius nor the inclination. He was thus eminently unfitted to consolidate the conquest his father had bequeathed to him."

Erskine observes, "The real character of Humāyun may be better gleaned from the events of his reign than from the representations of his historians......In the earlier part of his reign, seconded by the veteran officers and well-trained army which his father had left him, he over-ran, first the kingdoms of Mālwa and Gujarat, and next those of Bihar and Bengal, very important and glorious acquisitions; but destitute of those powers of combination which are necessary for consolidating and retaining a conquest, as bravery and a well-disciplined army are for making it, he was compelled to abandon them all; and the greater part of his reign presented a series of reverses, rebellions, and anarchy,—the fruit of his lack of political firmness and determination."

The Empire could not rest on such shifty foundations. Hence the Afghan restoration.

SOME RELEVANT DATES

A.D.

1531 Lodi chiefs sheltered from Humāyun by Bahādur Shāh. Bahādur Shāh of Gujarat annexes Mālwa; defeats Deccani forces. Achyuta Rāya succeeds Krishnadeva Rāya. Portuguese victories at Daman and Mangalore. Last battle between Bijapur and Ahmednagar. Death of Vallabhāchārya.

1532 Treaty between Bengal and Gujarat. Sher Khān takes Chunar and Rohtas. Maldeo of Jodhpur regains Ajmer and Nagaur. Portuguese levy tribute from Bombay and Thāṇa; Bassein captured and destroyed. Humāyun's campaigns in Mālwa and Gujarat.

1533 Nasrat Shāh and his son Firūz successively murdered; Ghiyās-ud-dīn Mahmud's usurpation in Bengal. Bahādur Shāh raises siege of Chitor on payment of tribute.

1534 Death of Ismail Adil Shāh of Bijapur; his son Mallu deposed after six months. Diu fortified by the Portuguese.

A.D.

1535 Humāyun victorious over Bahādur ; capture of Māndu and Champaner. Deposition of Mallu and accession of Ibrāhim Adil Shāh. Anarchy in Mewar.

1536 Sher Khān becomes master of Bihar. da Cunha fortifies Bassein.

1537 Bahādur Shāh drowned.

1538 Death of Guru Nānak (b. 1469) ; accession of Guru Angad.

1539 Humāyun defeated by Sher Khān in Bengal ; Sher Shāh proclaimed King. The Society of Jesus founded.

1540 Humāyun finally defeated by Sher Shāh at Kanauj. Sher Shāh occupies Delhi. Mirza Haidar (Humāyun's cousin) captures Kashmir. Humāyun exiled.

CHAPTER XI

AFGHAN RESTORATION

"It was the rare good fortune of the house of Timur that they were able at last to regain their heritage of conquest, strengthened by the work of the Afghan Sher Shah, an administrator of marked originality, who, all unwittingly built for the Mughals that structure of administrative machinery which, while it was necessary for securing the triumph of the new ideal of kingship they represented, they had been entirely unable to construct for themselves." In this brief statement, Rushbrook-Williams has admirably summed up the place of the Afghan Restoration in the history of the Mughal Empire. Moreover, as the events of Humāyun's first reign were inextricably connected with the fortunes of Sher Shāh, his restoration and recovery of the Empire were bound up with the misfortunes of Sher Shāh's descendants. The sad contrast between Bābur's brilliance and Humāyun's political incapacity also finds a sharp echo in the Afghan episode ; both pointing to the same moral for us, viz., the fatal incapacity of monarchical, like other, genius to transmit itself. We have already followed a substantial part of Sher Shāh's career, in his triumphant duel with Humāyun. Here must be attempted a more comprehensive study of his life and character.

Sher Shāh's Antecedents :

Sher Shāh was born in the reign of Sultan Bahol (1450-88) in the 'City of Victory' Hisār-Fīrūzā founded by Fīruz Shāh Tughlak. 'The grandfather of Sher Shāh, by name Ibrāhim Khān Sūr, with his son Hasan Khān, the father of Sher Shāh, came to Hindustan from Afghanistan... They settled in the *pargana* of Bajwāra.' Later, Jamāl Khān Sarang Khāni of Hisar-Fīrūzā bestowed on Ibrāhim 'several villages in *pargana* Narnaul for the maintenance of forty horsemen.' Hasan Khān entered the service of Umar Khān, *Khān-i-āzam*, who was 'counsellor and courtier of Sultan Bahlol.' Umar Khān gave 'several villages in the *pargana* of Shāhābad as a *jagir* to Hasan Khān.' After Ibrāhim's death Hasan Khān also received his father's

jagir 'with several villages in addition to it.' When Jamāl Khān was sent to the *subah* of Jaunpur by Sikander Lodi (who had succeeded Bahlol), he took with him Sher Shāh's father, being 'much pleased with Hasan Khān's good service,' and 'gave him in *jagir* the *parganas* of Sāsarām, Hājipur, and Tanda, near Benares, to maintain 500 horse.'

'Hasan Khān had eight sons. Farid Khān (*Sher Shāh*) and Nizām Khān were born of one Afghan mother;' the rest were born of slave-girls. 'Angry words often passed between Hasan and Farid.' The latter, 'annoyed with his father, went to Jamāl Khān at Jaunpur,' where he 'employed himself studying Arabic and the biographies of most of the kings of ancient times. He had got by heart the *Sikandar-Nāmā*, the *Gūlistān*, and *Bostān*, etc., and was also reading the works of the philosophers.' Subsequently, whenever, during his reign, learned men came to ask for a maintenance (*madad ma'ash*), he used to ask them about the *Hashia-i-Hindia*, and he still retained his liking for books of history and the lives of ancient kings.

'It happened after some years, that Hasan Khān came to Jamāl Khān when all his kinsmen in Jaunpur reproached him for having sent Farid away; and they remarked that *Farid Khān, young as he was, gave promise of future greatness*; that he bore the marks of excellence on his forehead, and that in all the tribe of Sūr there was none who possessed learning, talent, wisdom, and prudence like him; and he had qualified himself so well, that if Hasan Khān would entrust him with the charge of a *pargana*, he could discharge it excellently well, and perfectly perform all his duties.'

When father and son were reconciled, Farid was given charge of the two *parganas* of Sāsarām and Khāwaspur (in the present District of Shāhābad). Even so early as this (1511), the future Sher Shāh gave unmistakable evidence of his executive abilities and genius. "*I shall devote myself to increase the prosperity of the district,*" he said to his father, "*and that depends on a just administration.*" Abbās Khān further tells us, 'when he got to his *jagirs*, he said: "Let all the headmen (*muqaddaman*) and the cultivators (*muzzarian*) on whose labour the prosperity of the district depends, and all the village accountants (*patwaris*) attend my presence." When they came, he summoned also the soldiery, and thus addressed them:—

"My father has committed to me the power of appointing and dismissing you. I have set my heart on improving the prosperity of the district,

in which object also your own interests are concerned ; and by this means I hope to establish my reputation." When he had finished exhorting the soldiery, he turned to the peasantry and said : "This day I give you your choice as to your mode of payment. Do whatever is most advantageous to your own interests in every possible way."

'Some of the headmen asked for written agreements for a fixed money rent ; others preferred payment in kind. Accordingly he gave leases and took agreements, and fixed the payments for measuring the fields (*Jaribana*), and the fees for the tax-collectors and measurers (*muhassilana*) ; and he said to the *chaudharis* and headmen :—

"*I know well that the cultivation depends on the humble peasants ; for if they be ill off they will produce nothing, but if prosperous they will produce much.* I know the oppressions and exactions of which you have been guilty towards the cultivators ; and for this reason I have fixed the payments for measurements and the tax-gatherers' fees,—that if you exact from the cultivators more on this account than is fixed, it may not be credited to you in making up your accounts. Be it known to you, that I will take the accounts of the fees in my own presence. Whatever dues are rightly taken I will sanction, and compel the cultivators to pay them ; and I will also collect the Government dues for the autumn harvest in the autumn, and for the spring harvest in the spring ; for balances of Government dues are the ruin of a *pargana,* and the cause of quarrels between the cultivators and the Government officers. *It is right for a ruler to show leniency to the cultivators at the time of measurement, and to have a regard for the actual produce ; but when the time of payment comes he should show no leniency, but collect the revenue with all strictness.* If he perceives the cultivators are evading payment, he should so chastise them as to be an example to others not to act in the same way." He then said to the peasantry, "Whatever matter you have to represent, bring it always yourselves to me. *I will suffer no one to oppress you.*" Having thus addressed them he dismissed them with honorary dresses, to carry on their cultivation. After dismissing the cultivators, he said to his father's officers, "The *cultivators are the source of prosperity.* I have encouraged them and sent them away, *and shall always watch over their conditions, that no man may oppress and injure them : for if a ruler cannot protect the humble peasantry from the lawless, it is tyranny to exact revenue from them.* There are certain *zamindars* who have been behaving contumaciously in these *parganas,* who have not presented themselves at the governor's court (*makhama-i-hakim*), do not pay their full revenue, and harass the villagers in their neighbourhood—how shall I overcome and destroy them ?" They replied, "Most of the troops are with Mian Hasan ; wait a few days and they will return." Farid said, "I cannot have patience while they refuse to come to me, and continue to oppress and injure the people of God ; do you consider what I can contrive against these rebels, and how I may chastise them."

'He ordered his father's nobles to saddle 200 horses, and to see how many soldiers there were in the *pargana,* and he sent for all the Afghans and men of his tribe who were without *jagirs,* and said to them :

"I will give you subsistence and clothing till Mian Hasan returns. Whatever goods and money you may get from the plunder of these rebels is yours, nor will I ever require it of you ; and whoever among you may distinguish himself, for him I will procure a good *jagir* from Mian Hasan. I will myself give you horses to ride on." When they had heard this they were much pleased, and said they would not fail in doing their duty under his auspices. He put the men who had engaged to serve him in good humour by all sorts of favours, and by gifts of clothes, etc., and presented them also with a little money. . .

'Early in the morning, Farid Khān mounted and attacked the criminal *zamindars,* and put all the rebels to death, and making all their women and children prisoners, ordered his men to sell them as slaves ; and brought other people to the village and settled them there. When the other rebels heard of the death, imprisonment, and ruin of these, they listened to wisdom, repented of their contumacy, and abstained from theft and robbery. If any soldier or peasant had a complaint, Farid would examine it in person, and carefully investigate the cause, nor did he ever give way to carelessness or sloth. In a very short time, both *parganas* became prosperous, and the soldiery and peasantry were alike contented. When Mian Hasan heard of this he was much pleased ; and in all companies used to make mention of the prosperity of his *parganas,* the gallantry of his son, and the subjection of the *zamindars.*'

In spite of all this, however, Farid once again lost favour with his whimsical father, and for a time sought refuge at the court of Ibrāhim Lodi at Agra, under the patronage of Daulat Khān. When that prince died on the gory field of Pānipat (April, 1526), the young adventurer went to Bahar Khān, son of Daryā Khān, who had assumed the title of Sultan Muhammad. 'Employing himself day and night in his business, Farid gained Bahar Khān's favour, and became one of his most intimate friends. In consequence of his excellent arrangements, he became celebrated throughout the country of Bihar.' One day he went out hunting with Bahar Khān, and a tiger (*sher*) having been started, Farid Khān slew it. On account of this gallant encounter Bahar Khān gave him the title of "Sher Khān, the Tiger Chief."

Sher Khān after this, getting help from Sultan Junaid Barlas, the governor of Jaunpur, sought preferment under Bābur at Agra. There, being admitted to the court, he remained for some time among the Mughals, was present at the siege of Chānderi, and 'acquainted himself with their military arrangements, their modes of governing, and the character of their nobles.' "*If luck aided me,*" he is reported to have said among the Afghans, "*and fortune stood my friend, I could easily oust the Mughals from Hindustan.*" Bābur, with his keen insight into human character, observed to Khalifā, his minister, "Keep an eye on Sher Khān, he is a clever man, and the marks of royalty are visible on his forehead. I have seen many Afghan nobles, greater men than he, but they never made any impression on me; but as soon as I saw this man, it entered into my mind that he ought to be arrested, for I find in him the qualities of greatness and marks of mightiness."

Conquest of Empire :

Sher Khān was too circumspect a man to miss the significance of this observation. So he quitted Bābur's camp at the earliest opportunity. "I have no longer any confidence in the Mughals, nor they in me," he declared, "I must go to Sultan Muhmmad Khān." When Sultan Muhammad died, Sher Khān became the Deputy to his son Jalāl Khān, in the Government of Bihar and its dependencies, about October 1529. The following year (1530) Sher Khān *captured the important fortress of Chunar. . . This may be considered the starting point of his career of aggression.* The manner in which he came by it is thus described by Abbās Sarwāni :—

'Sultan Ibrāhim Lodi had entrusted the fort of Chunar to Tāj Khān Sarang Khāni, and the royal treasures were deposited in the fort. Now this Tāj Khān was altogether a slave to his love for his wife Lād Malikā, who was a woman of great sagacity and wisdom. One night, Tāj Khān's eldest son (by another wife) wounded Lād Malikā with a sabre, but not severely. Her servants complained to Tāj Khān, who drew his sword, and ran out to kill his son. He, perceiving that his father was about to kill him for the sake of his wife, struck his father with his sabre, and escaped out of the house. Tāj Khān died of the wound.' Sher Khān, after this incident, cleverly ingratiated himself with Lād Malika and married her. By this means he not only got possession of the fort, but 'she gave him a present consisting of 150 of the exceedingly valuable jewels, and 7 *maṇs* of pearls and 150 *maṇs* of gold, many other articles and ornaments.'

Subsequent to this, Sher Khān also got into his power and possession the *parganas* near the fort of Chunar, and further strengthened his resources by inheriting 60 *maṇs* of gold from Guhar Husain, the widow of Nāsir Khān.

When Humāyun had overcome Sultan Mahmūd Lodi, and put the greater number of his followers to death, at the battle of Dauroh, he sent Hindu Beg to take Chunar from Sher Khān, but the latter refused to give it up. Jauhār says, 'When the victorious army of the Mughals reached Chunar, Jalāl Khān, son of Sher Khān, and several other nobles were within the fortress ; the fortress was besieged for four months. When Sher Khān saw that the fort would fall to-day or to-morrow, he made his submission and sent his own son, Kutb Khān, to the presence of His Majesty (Humāyun) and secured peace.' Thus he put off Humāyun for the time being with clever but insincere professions of loyalty. Humāyun withdrew and turned towards Gujarat, with a false sense of security in the eastern provinces. "Never were the eastern provinces rendered so submissive to the throne of Delhi after the death of Sultan Sikandar (1517) as now," writes Professor Qanungo. "The indomitable Afghan leaders, Baban and Bāyazid, were killed ; the country on the northern bank of the Ganges from the Gumti to the Gandak (boundary of the kingdom of Bengal) was as tranquil as ever. On the southern bank of the Ganges the pretensions of Sher Khān were subdued, and he was forced to yield obedience and send his son to the imperial service. But the serpent was scotched, not killed ; and this foreboded future trouble. When Humāyun was reposing in the bed of fancied security, it recovered from the shock and gathered fresh strength. The seed of life-long enmity was sown between the two men."

Bihar and Bengal : To resume Abbās Khān's narrative, 'Sher Khān took advantage of this opportunity, and did not leave one enemy of his remaining throughout the kingdom of Bihar. He also began to patronise all Afghans. Many of them who had assumed the garb of religious mendicants on account of their misfortunes, he relieved and enlisted as soldiers ; and some who refused to enlist, and preferred a life of mendicancy, he put to death, and declared *he would kill every Afghan who refused to be a soldier.* He was also very careful of his Afghans in action, that their lives might not be uselessly sacrificed. When the Afghans heard that Sher Khān was eagerly desirous of patronising their race, they entered into his ser-

vice from all directions. Sultan Bahādur (of Gujarat) being defeated by Humāyun, went towards Surat, and the whole of Afghans who were in his service, whether chiefs or common soldiers, came to Sher Khān.

'When Nasir Khān (Nusrat Shāh) ruler of Bengal died, the nobles of Bengal made Sultan Mahmūd his successor ; but he was not able to manage the kingdom, and it fell into disorder. Mahmūd Shāh, nevertheless, conceived the design of conquering Bihar from the Afghans, and accordingly despatched Kutb Khān with a large force for that purpose. Sher Khān earnestly and repeatedly remonstrated ; but Kutb Khān gave no heed to his remonstrances. Sher Khān consequently told his Afghans, " With the Mughals on one side, and the army of Bengal on the other, we have no recourse save in our own bravery." The Afghans replied, " Be of good cheer, for we will fight to the utmost ; we will never yield the field until we either conquer or die."

'Sher Khān having prepared for a sturdy resistance, met the enemy. A severe action ensued in which the Bengal army was defeated...Of the treasure, horses, elephants, etc., which fell into his hands, Sher Khān did not give any part to the Lohānis, and so he became a man of wealth. This kindled the jealousy of the Lohānis, who thereafter became the enemies of Sher Khān. They tried to bring about his fall in several ways, not excluding murder. When they were foiled in their attempts, they won over Jalāl Khān (Sher Khān's nominal sovereign) to their side, and even intrigued with their enemy the King of Bengal. The Lohānis as a tribe were the rivals of the Sūrs. Sher Khān himself stated : " The Lohānis are a much stronger and more powerful tribe than the Sūrs ; and the custom of the Afghan is, that if any man has four kinsmen more than another, he thinks little of killing or dishonouring his neighbour."

'As soon as Sher Khān heard that Jalāl Khān had gone over to the King of Bengal, he was much pleased, and said :

> " I felt certain that the army of the King of Bengal would assuredly come to attempt the conquest of Bihar, and as enmity existed between the Lohānis and myself, I feared lest the enemy should be victorious, for *the surest means of defeat are divisions in your own army.* Now that the Lohānis are gone to Bengal, there are no quarrels in my army ; and if there be no divisions among the Afghans, how can the Bengal army compare with them in the day of battle? Even the Mughals cannot equal

them. Please God, when I have dispersed the Bengal army, you will soon see, if I survive, how I will expel the Mughals from Hindustan."

Events showed that these calculations of Sher Khān were not wrong. 'After this Sher Khān began to strengthen himself, and enlist more men. Wherever there were any Afghans he sent for them, and gave them any money they asked. Having collected a very large force, and made every preparation, and having gained the goodwill of his army, he placed the country of Bihar in his rear, and proceeded against the King of Bengal, "*This campaign*," says Prof. Qanungo, "*was destined to end in one of the most decisive battles of the medieval history of India. It was a turning point in the career of Sher Shāh.*" The following account of the engagement is given by Abbās Khān :—

Battle of Surājgahr : 'When one watch of the night was yet remaining, Sher Khān arrayed his forces, and brought them out of their entrenchments ; and after the morning prayers, he himself came out, and said to his chiefs, "In the enemy's army there are many elephants and guns, and a great force of infantry ; we must fight them in such a manner that they shall not be able to preserve their original order. The Bengal cavalry should be drawn away from their guns and infantry, and the horses intermingled with the elephants so that their array may be disordered. I have thought of a stratagem by which to defeat the Bengalis. I will draw up the greater part of my forces behind the cover of that height which we see, but will retain for the attack a small number of experienced and veteran horse. Now, they will fight exactly in the same manner as they did on the former occasion, without any expectation of defeat. I will bring up my selected division, who after discharging one flight of arrows on the Bengali army, shall retreat. The enemy is presumptuous on account of his superior force. He will think the Afghans are beginning to fly ; and becoming eager, he will leave his artillery and foot in the rear, and press on with all expedition himself, and disorder and confusion will find their way into his order of battle. I will then bring out my force which had been concealed behind the eminence, who will attack the enemy. The Bengali cavalry, deprived of the support of their artillery and infantry, are by themselves unable to cope with the Afghan horse. I hope by the favour of God that their force will be routed and put to flight.

The result was just what Sher Khān had so shrewdly anticipated. 'The whole of the treasure, elephants, and train of artillery fell into the hands of Sher Khān, who was thus supplied with munitions of war, and became master of the kingdom of Bihar, and much other territory besides. *Since God, the most holy and omnipotent, had preordained from all eternity to give the kingdom of Hind to Sher Khān, and that people of the Lord should live in ease and comfort*

under the shadow of his justice, and that he should be a zealous and just ruler, his wealth daily increased, and the whole country gradually came into his possession.'

In the beginning of May 1535, Sher Khān again turned upon Mahmūd Shāh, and began a war of conquest of his territories on the frontier of Bihar. 'This came as a complete surprise to the incapable voluptuary who disgraced the throne of mighty rulers like Husain Shāh and Nusrat Shāh. Sher Khān's plan of campaign was one of slow, methodical conquest and annexation. His object was to wrest all the territories from Mahmūd Shāh on this side of Teliagarhi.' Mahmūd Shāh bought him off for the time being with an indemnity of 13,00,000 gold pieces, even against the advice of his Portuguese allies. Encouraged by this, Sher Khān once more led a powerful army into Bengal in 1537. From the Portuguese historians we learn that Sher Khān sent his lieutenants to occupy outlying districts like Chitagong, while he himself invested Gaur, the capital of Bengal. These activities of Sher Khān invited Humāyun's attention towards him. Abu-l Faḍl says, 'Meanwhile news came of the emergence of Sher Khān and of his commotions in the eastern provinces. . .Orders were issued to make preparations for an expedition to Bengal. It was decided that Sher Khān should be put down and the territories of Bengal should be subdued.' We have already followed the course of subsequent events. Sher Khān defeated Humāyun at Chaunsa, in 1539, and assumed the title of Sher Shāh ; *at the battle of Bilgrām, in 1540, Humāyun was finally routed and expelled out of the Empire.*

Here we might notice one incident, which, like the Fath Malikā story, throws light upon the machiavellian character of Sher Shāh. It is the manner in which he took possession of the great fort of Rohtas :

Sher Khān was in difficulties owing to the capture of Chunar by Humāyun. 'There existed a friendly connexion between Sher Khān and the Rāja of the fort of Rohtas, and Churāman, the Rāja's *nāib*, was on particular terms of intimate friendship and alliance with Sher Khān. This Churāman was a Brāhmaṇ and had formerly shown kindness to the family of Sher Khān's brother Nizām, and procured them shelter in the fort of Rohtas. . . .On the present occasion Sher Khān wrote that he was in great straits, and that if the Rāja would give him the loan of the fort for a short time he would be obliged to him all his days, and that when all danger was past, he would again restore the fort. . . Sher Khān also gave to Churāman a bribe of 6 *maṇs* of gold, and said, "Persuade in any way you can the

Rāja to give me the loan of his fort for a few days for my family; but if he will not give it, then I will go and make my peace with the Emperor Humāyun, and will revenge myself on everything belonging to the Rāja." ....When the Rāja finally consented, Sher Khān treacherously ordered his own men, if the guards did not obey the order to leave the fort, to eject them by force....Sher Khān placed his own guards and sentries in every part of the fort, and drove the Rāja away from the fort. In the manner thus described he got possession of the fort of Rohtas. The commonly received report that Sher Khān put Afghans into *dolis* and sent them into the fort as women, is altogether erroneous and false,' writes Abbās Sarwāni; 'for I, the writer of this history,....have inquired of several chiefs and nobles who were with Sher Khān in the affair.'

The strategy, whatever the details thereof, was probably justified by the importance of the place. For, after taking possession of the fort, Sher Khān observed, "*The fort of Chunar is no fort in comparison with this*; *as that has gone out of my possession, this has come into it. I was not so pleased at the conquest of Gour as I am at getting possession of Rohtas.*" Sher Khān was the first Muslim conqueror of this fort; he not only secured in it a safe retreat for the Afghan families but also came into possession of the vast treasures which had been accumulated there for ages by the Hindu kings. Prof. Qanungo thinks it must have come into Sher Khān's possession in March 1538. An admirable summary of Sher Khān's relations with Humāyun—though only from the Afghan point of view—up to the battle of Chaunsa, is contained in his address to his army just before that engagement. Assembling all his chiefs, he said:

"I have promised peace to the Emperor Humāyun; but I have considered that all the good service I have rendered has produced no good fruit; and after all my loyalty to him..., he demanded from me the fort of Chunar. When I refused to yield it, he sent a force to take it; and when that failed, he came himself to seize it by force, but abandoned his intentions when he heard that Mirza Muhammad Zamān had escaped from prison, and had raised sedition in the country. Moreover Sultan Bahādur, King of Gujarat, was coming to invade the country of Delhi and so he was compelled to return. I sent my son Kutb Khān with him throughout the Gujarat campaign, accompanied by 500 valiant horsemen skilled in the use of the sabre. Though I could have taken possession of the country of Jaunpur, etc., yet I did not commit any act of hostility, for the Emperor is mighty; and though I had the power, I would not do any disloyal and evil act, that the Emperor might perceive I was his faithful servant, and desist from seeking to injure me. When he returned from Gujarat, he got his army in readiness, and without regarding my loyalty, did his best to expel me; but as my fortune was great, he did not achieve his desire. I made every submission, but it was all profitless. When in violation of

all his promises, he attacked Bengal, I lost all hope in his goodness, and apprehending evil from him, was compelled to declare hostilities against him, and I expelled his governors and spoiled his country as far as Sāmbhal, and have not left a single Mughal in these parts. Now with what hope can I conclude this peace with him? He makes peace and manifests a friendly disposition towards me, because his army is in want of horses and cattle and of every equipment, and because his brothers have rebelled against him. He is but playing with me, and eventually will not abide by this peace; but having appeased the rebellion of his brother on his arrival at Agra, and refurnished his army, he will not fail to uproot and destroy me. *I have often experienced that the Afghans are braver in battle than the Mughals, who only got the country from the dissensions of the Afghans.* If my brothers advise so, I will break off the peace, and will try my fortune."

Events, as we have seen, stood by Sher Shāh's fortune. *Chaunsa and Bilgrām gave the Empire of Humāyun to his Afghan rival. Bābur's wise declaration came true*: '*The world is his who exerts himself.*' We must now follow the rest of Sher Shāh's brilliant career.

Pursuit of Humāyun: 'Sher Shāh being at his ease regarding the Mughals, wrote to Suja'at Khān, whom he had left as *faujdar*, in the country of Bihar and Rohtas, to besiege the fort of Gwalior. . . . As soon as he received the *firmān*, Suja'at Khān went and besieged Gwalior. From Kanauj Sher Shāh despatched Barmazid Gur with a large force in advance, but directed him not to hazard an engagement with the Emperor Humāyun, and he also sent another force under Nāsir Khān towards Sāmbhal. Having speedily settled the country about Kanauj, he betook himself in the direction of Agra. 'When Sher Shāh approached Agra, the Emperor, unable to remain there, fled towards Lahore. Sher Shāh was greatly displeased at this, and on his arrival at Agra sent Khāwas Khān and Barmazid Gur in the direction of Lahore, with a large force to pursue the Emperor.

'On arriving at Delhi, the principal men and inhabitants of the city of Sāmbhal came and complained that Nāzir Khān had oppressed and tyrannised over them in various ways. Sher Shāh, therefore, despatched Isā Khān, as a person endowed both with valour and justice, and placed Nāsir Khān under him. After this, Sher Shāh breathed a sigh of relief, and said, "I am now at my ease regarding the whole country from Delhi to Lucknow." Entrusting Mewat to Hāji Khān, he then proceeded towards Lahore. . . On the third march beyond Lahore, he heard that Mirza Kāmrān had gone by

way of the Judh hills to Kabul, and that the Emperor Humāyun was marching along the banks of the Indus to Multan and Bhakkar. The King (Sher Shāh) went to Khushab, and thence despatched Khāwas Khān. . . .and the greater part of the army, in pursuit of the Emperor, towards Multan. He instructed them not to engage the Emperor but to drive him beyond the borders of the kingdom, and then to return. The Mughal division which had quitted the Emperor, and was marching towards Kabul, encountered Khāwas Khān, not being strong enough to fight, fled leaving their drums and standards behind, which fell into Khāwas Khān's hands, and the Afghan army returning from that place rejoined Sher Shāh.'

Baluchi and Gakkar : 'Sher Shāh delayed some time at Khushab. While there, Ismail Khān, Fath Khān, and Ghāzi Khān Baluchi came and waited on him. . .Sher Shāh confirmed Ismail Khān in the country of Sind. The chiefs of every tribe and family of Roh came to wait on him ; and Sher Shāh wisely left these Baluchi chiefs undisturbed in their possessions. Then he marched with all his forces and retinue, through all the hills of Padman and Garjhak, in order that he might choose a fitting site and build a fort there to keep down the Gakkars, in which he might leave a garrison on the Kabul road, when he himself returned. Having selected Rohtas, he built there the fort which now exists, and laid waste the country of the Gakkars.'

Burns considered this one of the greatest bulwarks between Tartary and India. The imperfectly subdued Gakkars 'made a vow among themselves that no one should serve as day-labourer in the construction of the fort. If any one act to the contrary, he must be destroyed. .Todar Mal (who later became so very famous in the reign of Akbar) complained of it to Sher Shāh, who wrote in reply, that they should go on with the building though they paid for the stone its weight in copper. The fort was completed though the expenses were enormous. Sher Shāh called it 'Little Rohtas'. The *Tarikh-i-Dāudi* calls it 'New Rohtas', and adds, that it 'cost 8 *krors*, 5 thousand, and 2½ *dāms*, which means *Bahlolis*—all which is written over the gate of the fort.'

Bengal : 'In the midst of this, news came from Bengal that Khizr Khān, the governor of Bengal, had assumed the dignity of a king and defied his authority. So he set out himself for Bengal.' There, "instead of placing the whole province under one military governor, as had hitherto been the custom, Sher Shāh created several small governorships. The governors placed over these divisions were

equal in status, and wholly independent of one another, in the administration of their respective areas. They were all directly appointed by him and were responsible to him alone. By this single stroke of policy, he struck at the very root of the evil of chronic rebellion." He remained in Bengal for about seven months, from June 1541 to January 1542. Then he returned to Agra.

Mālwa : In April 1542, Sher Shāh marched towards Māndu by way of Gwalior, in order to wreak on the rulers of Māndu his revenge for their backwardness in assisting Kutb Khān. Apart from this, Prof. Qanungo assigns two more political motives : (i) To come into direct touch with the kingdoms of Gujarat and Mewar, through which the Mughals might break into Mālwa ; (ii) to forestall the design of Maldeo in Mālwa and crush Maldeo's prospective allies before they could cause serious trouble. Mallu Khān who had assumed the title of king and the name of Kādir Shāh, held possession and rule of the city of Shadmābad, that is to say, the fort of Māndu, and of Ujjain, Sārangpur and the fort of Rantambhor. When Sher Shāh reached Sārangpur, Mallu Khān came and submitted. He was much impressed with the rigour, discipline and exertions of Sher Shāh's army, and said to the Afghans, " You submit yourselves to wonderful labours and exertions ; night and day you have no rest ; ease and comfort are things forbidden to you." The Afghans replied, " Such is our master's custom. It behoves a soldier, whatever service his chief may order, or whatever labour or exertion he may require, not to consider it a hardship. *Ease is for women, it is shameful to honourable men.*" Sher Shāh assigned the country of Māndu to Suja'at Khān....and then returned to Agra, *via* Dhār and Rantambhor.'

Raisin : From Agra he went towards Bihar and Bengal, where he suffered an attack of fever and ague. After recovery he once again returned to Agra. When he arrived there, in all the pride of his state, he set off for the country of Māndu, in the year 950 A.H. (1548 A. D.), and took the fort of *Raisin.* This expedition, according to Abbās Khān, had been provoked by the oppression of Musalman families by its Rāja Puran Mal. But Prof. Qanungo definitely says, " It was not undertaken out of a religious motive to punish Puran Mal for enslaving the families of the Muslims of Chanderi as the bigoted Muslim historians fondly believed..No incentive of fanaticism was necessary, as the political object was a sufficient stimulant

to move Sher Shāh against Raisin. . .One single fort unsubdued might overturn an empire, as Sher Shāh could realise by contemplating the fate of Humāyun. So he determined to safeguard himself against unknown dangers by rooting out Rajput influence in Mālwa." Whatever might have been the motive or incentive for the attack, Puran Mal and his companions, Abbās Khān proceeds to tell us, 'like hogs at bay, failed not to exhibit valour and gallantry ; but in the twinkling of an eye all were slain. Such of their wives and families as were not slain were captured. . . .He made over the fort of Raisin to Munshi Shāhbhāz Khān Sarwāni, and returned himself towards Agra, and remained at the capital during the rainy season.'

Sind and Multan : About the same time as the fall of Raisin, Sind and Multan were conquered by Sher Shāh's general, Haibat Khān Niazi. The turbulent Baluchis were ever a source of danger to Multan. The conquest of these parts was of utmost importance for Sher Shāh. More than anything else it closed the route to Kandahār, *via* Siwi, against Humāyun, by strengthening Sakkar and Bhakkar to which he gave the name of Shergarh. The conquest was completed by November 1543.

Rajputāna : 'After the conclusion of the rains, Sher Shāh ordered that his conquering forces, beyond all calculation or enumeration, should under the shadow of his victorious standards, march towards the country of Nagaur, Ajmer and Jodhpur, which belonged to Maldeo the Rāja with whom Humāyun had sought shelter in vain.

'When he approached the enemy, Sher Shāh contrived a stratagem ; and having written letters in the name of Maldeo's nobles to this effect, viz., "Let not the King permit any anxiety or doubt to find its way to his heart. During the battle we will seize Maldeo and bring him to you" ; and having inclosed these letters in a *kharita* or silken bag, he gave it to a certain person, and directed him to go near to the tent of the *vakīl* of Maldeo, and remain there ; and when he went out, to drop the *kharita* on his way, and conceal himself. Sher Shāh's agent did as he was ordered ; and when the *vakīl* of Maldeo saw the *kharita* lying, he picked it up, and sent the letters to Maldeo. When the latter learned their contents, he was much alarmed, and fled without fighting. Although his nobles took oaths of fidelity, he did not heed them. Some of the chieftains, such as Jaya Chand and Goha, and others, came and attacked Sher Shāh, and displayed exceeding valour. Part of the army was routed, and a certain Afghan came to Sher Shāh, and advised him in his native tongue saying, "Mount, for the infidels are routing your army." Sher Shāh was performing his morning devotions, and reading the *Musta' abi-i ashr*. He gave no

reply to the Afghan. By a sign he ordered his horse, and mounted, when news of victory was brought to the effect that Khāwas Khān had slain Jaya and Goha with all their forces. When Sher Shāh learnt of the valour and gallantry of these men, he exclaimed, '*I had nearly lost the kingdom of Delhi, for a handful of bhajra* (millet seed)."

This occurred about March 1544. 'He left Khāwas Khān and Isā Khān Niazi and some other chiefs in the country of Nagaur, and himself withdrew. Khāwas Khān founded a city in his own name, near the fort of Jodhpur, and brought into his power and possession the whole country of Nagaur and Ajmer, the fort of Jodhpur, and the districts of Mārwar. Maldeo went to the fort of Siwāna, on the borders of Gujarat.' Sher Shāh, to allay misgivings, paid a flying visit to his capital, and rejoined his camp at Ajmer, about the middle of June 1544.

Chitor : Next he turned to Chitor. Mewar at this time was utterly prostrate ; she seemed to have no more blood left to shed in defence of her capital. It was one of the darkest periods in the history of Rajputāna. The bastard Banabīr, whom the disaffected nobles of Mewar had raised to the throne, had murdered the dethroned Bikramjīt, and would have done the same with the infant Udai Singh, but for his nurse Panna's noble sacrifice. The boy had been installed only two years before Sher Shāh invaded. No wonder that 'when he was yet 12 *kos* from the fort of Chitor, the Rāja who was its ruler sent him the keys. When Sher Shāh came to Chitor he left in it the younger brother of Khāwas Khān, Mian Ahmad Sarwāni and Hasan Khān Khaljī. Sher Shāh himself marched towards Kachwāra, and thence to Kālinjar.

Kālinjar : 'The Rāja of Kālinjar, Kirāt Singh, did not come out to meet him. So Sher Shāh ordered the fort to be invested, and threw up mounds against it, and in a short time the mounds rose so high that they overtopped the fort. The men who were in the streets and houses were exposed, and the Afghans shot them with their arrows and muskets from off the mounds. The cause of this tedious mode of capturing the fort was this : Among the women of Rāja Kirāt Singh was a Patar slave-girl, i. e., a dancing-girl. The King had heard exceeding praise of her, and he considered how to get possession of her, for he feared lest, if he stormed the fort, the Rāja Kirāt Singh would certainly make a *jauhār*, and would burn the girl.'

"The fortress of Kālinjar was besieged about the beginning of November 1544 A.D. The natural strength of the fort was such as to baffle any attempt to storm it. The hill on which the fort stands has an elevation of 1230 ft. above the sea, and is isolated from the adjacent range by a chasm or ravine about 1,200 yds. wide. The sides rise rather steeply from the plain, and in the upper part have a nearly perpendicular face of 150 or 180 ft. in height, and in most places inaccessible. The fortifications are massively constructed of large blocks of stone laid generally without cement and about 35 ft. thick."

'On Friday, the 9th Rabiu-l awwal 952 A. H. when one watch and two hours of the day were over, Sher Shāh called for his breakfast, and ate with his *ulema* and priests, without whom he never breakfasted. In the midst of his breakfast, Sheikh Nizām said, "' There is nothing equal to a religious war against the infidels. If you be slain, you become a martyr; if you live, you become a *ghāzī*." When Sher Shāh had finished eating his breakfast, he ordered Daryā Khān to bring loaded shells, and went up to the top of a mound and with his own hand shot off many arrows, and said, "Daryā Khān comes not; he delays very long." But when the shells were at last brought, Sher Shāh came down from the mound and stood where they were placed. While the men were employed in discharging them, by the will of God Almighty, one shell full of gun-powder struck on the gate of the fort and broke, and came and fell where a great number of other shells were placed. Those which were loaded began to explode. Sheikh Halil, Sheikh Nizām, and other learned men, and most of the others who escaped were not burnt; but they brought out Sher Shāh partially burnt. A young princess who was standing by the rockets was burnt to death.

'When Sher Shāh was carried into his tent, all his nobles assembled in *darbār*; and he sent for Isā Khān Hajib and Masnad Khān Kalkapur, the son-in-law of Isā Khān and the paternal uncle of the author (Abbās Khān), to come into his tent, and ordered them to take the fort while he was yet alive. When Isā Khān came out and told the chiefs that it was Sher Shāh's order that they should attack on every side and capture the fort, men came and swarmed out instantly on every side like ants and locusts; and by the time of afternoon prayers captured the fort, putting everyone to the sword, and sending all the infidels to hell. About the hour of evening prayers, the intelligence of the victory reached Sher Shāh, and marks of joy and pleasure appeared on his countenance.

'On the 10th Rabiu-l awwal 952, A. H. (22 May 1545 A.D.) Sher Shāh went from the hostel of this world to rest in the mansion of happiness, and ascended peacefully from the abode of this world to the lofty heavens; the date was discovered in the words *az atash*

murd, he died from fire.' It is not certain whether Sher Shāh's body was buried at Kālinjar, or removed to the grand mausoleum erected by himself at *Sāsarām*—the home of his greatness. He had reigned for six months as King of Bengal and Jaunpur, and for five years as the Emperor of Hindustan. He might have been sixty years of age at the time of his death. "Thus passed away in the mid-career of victory and beneficent activity the great soldier and statesman, with whom there appeared for the persecuted Hindus the dawn of that era of toleration, justice, and equality of political rights, which broadened into dazzling noon on the accession of Akbar."

Sher Shāh's Genius :

Sher Shāh was, according to all estimates, a man of varied talents and extraordinary genius. It would not be unfair to compare him with Henry VII in his dealings with the feudal nobility ; with Frederick William I—Prussia's greatest 'internal king'—in the care he bestowed upon both military organisation and civil administration ; with Kautalya and Machiavelli in his practical outlook and political principles ; and Asoka in his benevolent intentions and solicitude for the welfare of all classes of his subjects. In fact, he was a combination of Bābur and Frederick the Great of Prussia. Erskine writes : "Sher Shāh was one of the most extraordinary men whose name appears in the history of India. His character has been represented in very different lights by different authors. As he was long the grand enemy of the house of Timūr, whom for a time he drove out of India, by their partisans he has been drawn in very unfavourable colours. But the evidence of less prejudiced writers, and of facts, must restore to him the high praise and honourable distinction that, with all the imperfections of his character, are justly his due."

A narrative of Sher Shāh's life, such as the one we have attempted above, is the best commentary on his character that any one can offer. Apart from his undoubted genius, the outstanding quality that explains his success was his capacity for incessant activity. "For," said he, "it behoves the great to be always active, and they should not consider, on account of the greatness of their dignity and loftiness of their rank, the affairs and business of the kingdom, small or petty.

The *Wakiat-i-Mushtaki* gives the following account of the daily routine of Sher Shāh's busy life :—'Sher Shāh was occupied night and day with the business of his kingdom, and never allowed himself to be idle. At the end of night he arose, performed his ablutions, and said his prayers.

Afterwards he called in his officers and managers to report all the occurrences of the day. Four hours he listened to the reading of reports on the affairs of the country or on business of the Government establishments. The orders which he gave were reduced to writing, and were issued and acted upon ; there was no need of further discussion. Thus he remained engaged till morning arrived. When it was time for prayers, he performed his devotions in a large congregation, and went through all the forms of prayer. Afterwards he received his nobles and soldiers, and made inquiries as to the horses brought to receive their brands. Then he went out and made a personal inspection of his forces, and settled the allowances of each individual by word of mouth until all was arranged. He then attended to many other affairs and audited accounts. Petitions were received from every quarter, and replies were sent ; he himself dictated them in Persian, and the scribes committed them to writing. Every person who came to wait upon him was received in the palace.'

The incentive for such activity was, no doubt, his great ambition ; but it was an ambition conceived by his national patriotism engendered by his early studies and experience. When his father's unfair treatment drove him to Jaunpur, he utilised the time in studying history, philosophy, and the biographies of ancient kings. 'Subsequently,' Abbās Khān informs us, 'whenever during his reign, learned men came to ask him for a maintenance, he used to ask them about the *Hashia-i Hindia*, and he still retained his liking for books of history and the lives of ancient kings.' When he was appointed to the administration of his father's *jagirs*, he carried with him a high but modest sense of duty. "To please you I accept the management of the two districts. I will not fail to do my duty to the best of my power. . . . I shall devote myself to increase the prosperity of the districts, and that depends on a just administration." His tenure as *jagirdar*, short though it was, revealed his practical genius, as well as his great love for the welfare of the people entrusted to his care,—particularly the peasants. He always liked the company of the religious and the learned. Abbās Khān tells us, he never breakfasted except in the company of the *ulema*. But in moments of action, he was his own best counsel. His unique sense of justice was a part of the man himself that determined the character of his administration. He was above all, and essentially, a man of destiny who had faith in himself and faith in God who seemed to have marked him out for the success that he achieved.

After the final discomfiture and dispersal of the enemy, he returned to the Imperial tents dismounted in the hall of audience, and humbly prostra-

ted himself in prayer to the Giver of all Victory. "He did not now hesitate to declare a dream which he had on the preceding night. He thought that he and Humāyun were both carried into the presence of the Prophet of God, who was sitting in state on a throne, and who, addressing the Emperor, told him that the Almighty had bestowed his kingdom on Sher Shāh; and, at the same time, taking the crown and cap of authority from his head, placed them on that of his rival, commanding him to rule with justice."

Genius has been defined as a happy mixture of luck, audacity, and infinite capacity to take pains. This is particularly true with regard to military achievement. Successful generalship, as Humāyun's failures amply demonstrated, required many other qualities besides personal courage. Above everything else, it required shrewd insight into human nature, resourcefulness, and a clear grasp of realities. The uniform success of Sher Shāh showed the presence in him of all these qualities. By way of illustration, we might recall here a few instances.

(i) The resolute manner in which he brought under control the recalcitrant *zamindars* on his father's estates was the first evidence he gave of his consummate ability to restore order in those troubled times.

'There were some *zamindars* who had committed all sorts of offences, such as theft and highway robbery, and refusing to pay revenue, never came to the governor's presence, but were insolent from confidence in their numbers. Although these were often warned, they took no heed. Farid collected his forces, and commanded that every one of his villagers who had a horse should come riding upon it, and that he who had not a horse should come on foot. And he took with him half his own soldiers, and the other half he employed in collecting revenue and other local duties. When the soldiers and peasants were assembled, he marched towards the villages of the recusants, and at a distance of a *kos* threw up an earthen entrenchment, and ordered them to cut down the neighbouring jungle. His horsemen he directed to petrol round the villages; to kill all men they met, and to make prisoners of the women and children; to drive in the cattle, to permit no one to cultivate the fields, to destroy crops already sown, and not to permit any one to bring anything from the neighbouring parts, nor to allow any one of them to carry anything out of the village, and not to permit a soul to go out. His footmen he also ordered to cut down the jungle. When the jungle was all cut down he marched from his former position, and made another entrenchment nearer the village, and occupied it. The rebels were humbled, and sent a representative saying, that if Farid Khān would pardon their fault, they would submit. Farid Khān replied that he would not accept their submission, and there could be nothing but hostility between him and them: to whichever God might

please, He would give the victory. Although the rebels humbled themselves in every way, and offered to pay a large sum of money, yet Farid Khān would not accept the money, but said to his men :—" This is the way of these rebels : first they fight and oppose their ruler : if they find him weak, they persist in their rebelliousness ; but if they see that he is strong, they come to him deceitfully, and humble themselves and agree to pay a sum of money, and so they persuade their ruler to leave them alone ; but as soon as they find an opportunity, they return to their evil ways."

'When the other rebels heard of the death, imprisonment, and ruin of these, they listened to wisdom, repented of their contumacy, and abstained from theft and robbery.'

(ii) A second instance where Sher Shāh showed his abilities as a general was when he fought the forces of Bengal. Ibrāhim Khān, the Bengali general, commanded vastly superior numbers, and possessed, besides many elephants, a park of artillery. But, Sher Khān who was a better commander made up for all these by his skill and resourcefulness. After a few days' skirmishing, he called together his men and said :—

" I have for some time abstained from meeting the Bengalis in the open field, and have kept myself sheltered under entrenchments, lest our men should be discouraged by the large numbers of the enemy. Now I am convinced that the Bengalis are much inferior to the Afghans in war. . . I will now engage in open battle, for without a general engagement we cannot destroy and disperse our enemies. Praise be to God, whenever such an engagement occurs between Afghans and Bengalis, the Afghans must prevail. It is impossible that the Bengalis can stand against them. At present this is my purpose. Tomorrow morning, if you concur with me, hoping in the mercy of the Protector, and trusting on this text—'By God's command the lesser number overcomes the greater,' I will engage the enemy in open battle, for it behoves us not to delay or be backward in this matter, as reinforcements will soon reach them." The Afghans replied : " That which your noble mind has determined is extremely right."

(iii) The manœuvres by which Sher Shāh encompassed the ruin of Humāyun were master-pieces of military strategy. For details the reader is referred to the descriptions of the battles of Chaunsa and Bilgrām. Although there was a uniformity in the tactics employed by Sher Shāh on both the occasions, Humāyun was too dull to profit by experience.

(iv) To economise in his men, and not to waste them in avoidable encounters was with Sher Shāh a constant principle. This often led him to attain his ends through means too open to moral censure.

The acquisition of Chunar, Rohtas, and Raisin are examples of treacherous conduct—though not infrequent in that Machiavellian age—which cast a deep shadow on Sher Shāh's otherwise fair reputation. His ruse of the forged letters in the case of Maldeo is of a piece with this unscrupulous behaviour, that sometimes passes in the name of political adroitness. Nevertheless, these actions seem to have originated chiefly from Sher Shāh's extreme reluctance to shed the blood of his own men needlessly. No wonder, therefore, that his men put their utmost trust in him. He inspired confidence in his soldiers by repeatedly telling them that 'the Mughals are not superior to the Afghans in battle or single combat ; but the Afghans have let the Empire of Hind slip from their hands on account of their internal dissensions.' His successive triumphs must have convinced them that he was right. He made it appear to the Afghans that his was a national cause ; and those whom he could not otherwise induce, he compelled by conscription.

'Many of them,' Abbās Khān says, 'who had assumed the garb of religious mendicants, on account of their misfortunes, he rallied and enlisted as soldiers ; and some who refused to enlist, and preferred a life of mendicancy, he put to death, and declared he would kill every Afghan who refused to be a soldier. He was very careful of his Afghans in action, that their lives might not be uselessly sacrificed. When the Afghans heard that Sher Khān was eagerly patronising their race, they entered into his service from all directions.'

"He was one of the most humane conquerors," writes Prof. Qanungo. "In spite of his severity, no general was more beloved of his soldiers. His personal magnetism was great, which animated his soldiers and made them cheerfully perform their onerous duties. After a hard day's march the soldiers were not allowed to rest before throwing up redoubts round their encampment. They implicitly submitted to all hardships, not as the slaves of an Oriental despot but as the comrades of an adored commander. . . .Originality and boldness of plan, rapidity of movement, and an eye for strategic situations characterised Sher Shāh's campaigns. He was averse to unnecessary bloodshed and cruelty, and had no passion for fight. He had above all, a heart which soldiers and statesmen often lack. He could feel for the misfortune of his enemy : we are told that tears burst out of his eyes when the Mughal queen with a multitude of ladies came out of the camp and stood suppliant before him (after Humāyun's defeat at Chaunsa)."

In the opinion of the same writer, Sher Shāh was "the greatest administrative and military genius among the Afghans." A careful examination of the administrative system that he established within his dominions and its abiding effects, in an otherwise chaotic age, would go to show that there is little exaggeration in the use of this superlative. Those who plead want of time in the case of Bābur will find in Sher Shāh's constructive achievement a convincing refutation of their apology for Bābur's lack of administrative genius. Abu-l Faḍl's observation that he introduced some of the many plans of Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī of which he had heard 'as they are detailed in the *Tarikh-i-Fīrūz-Shāhi*', does scant justice to Sher Shāh's political originality. But more than any detail of civil or military organisation which he might have borrowed from earlier kings, the spirit that informed his entire régime forms the basis of his enduring fame. Crooke's estimate in this respect is therefore quite appropriate : "He was the first Musalman ruler," he says, "who studied the good of his people. He had the genius to see that the government must be popularised, that the king must govern for the benefit of his subjects, that the Hindus must be conciliated by a policy of justice and toleration, that the land-revenue must be settled on an equitable basis, that material development of the country must be encouraged...All this and more Akbar strove to do later on....Sher Shāh relaxed the oppressive Muhammadan law code and provided for the administration of justice. That he introduced such extensive reforms in his short reign of five years is a wonderful proof of his executive ability. 'No government, not even the British, has shown so much wisdom as this Pathan,' as Keene says."

The *Tarikh-i-Sher-Shāhi* of Abbās Khān Sarwāni provides us with the best summary of Sher Shāh's administration :—

'When fortune gave into the hands of Sher Shāh the bridle of power, and the kingdom of Hind fell under his dominion,' says the chronicler, 'he made certain laws, both from his own ideas, and by extracting them from the works of the learned, for securing relief from tyranny, and for the repression of crime and villainy ; for maintaining the prosperity of his realms, the safety of the highways, and the comfort of merchants and troops. "Crime and violence," he said, prevent the development of prosperity. It behoves kings to be grateful for the favour that the Lord has made His people subject to them, and, therefore, not to disobey the commandments of God."

'Sher Shāh attended to every business concerning the administration of the kingdom and the revenues, whether great or small, in his own person. So he divided both day and night into portions for each separate business and suffered no idleness to find its way to him. "For," said he, "it behoves the great to be always active, and they should not consider, on account of the greatness of their own dignity and loftiness of their own rank, the affairs and business of the kingdom, small or petty, and must place no undue reliance on their ministers....The corruption of ministers of contemporary princes was the means of my acquiring the worldly kingdom I possess. A king should not have corrupt *vakils* or *wazirs*; for a receiver of bribes is dependent on the giver of bribes; and one who is dependent is unfit for the office of *vezir*, for he is an interested personage; and to an interested person loyalty and truth in the administration of the kingdom are lost."

'Sher Shāh was adorned with the jewel of justice, and he often times remarked: "*Justice is the most excellent of religious rites, and it is approved alike by the kings of infidels and of the faithful.*" When the young shoot of Sher Shāh's prosperity came into bearing, he always ascertained the exact truth regarding the oppressed, and the suitors for justice; and he never favoured the oppressors, although they might be his near relations, his dear sons, his renowned nobles, or of his own tribe; and he never showed any delay or lenity in punishing oppressors. He appointed courts of justice in every place.'

[Criminal justice was administered by the *Chief Shiqdar* and revenue disputes settled by the *Chief Munsif*. No historian tells us, says Qanungo, anything about the appointment of the *mir-i-adals* or the *qazis* for trying civil cases requiring the knowledge of Muslim canon-law. In an anecdote of the *Tarikh-i-Dāudi* (MS. p. 204) we find the only allusion to *mir-i-adal* and *qazi*. This was undoubtedly a continuation of an old institution, developed by Sultan Sikander Lodi.]

'He strictly impressed on the *amils* and governors, that if a theft or robbery occurred within their limits, and the perpetrators were not discovered, then they should arrest the *muqaddams* of the surrounding villages, and compel them to make it good; but if the *muqaddams* produced the offenders, or pointed out their haunts, the thieves and highway robbers themselves were punished with the penalties laid down in the holy law. And if murders should occur, and the murderers were not discovered, the *amils* were enjoined to seize the *muqaddams*, as detailed above, and imprison them and give

them a period within which to declare the murderers. If they produced the murderer, or pointed out where he lived, they were to let the *muqaddam* go, and put the murderer to death. But if the *muqaddams* of a village where the murder had occurred could not do this, they were themselves put to death ; for it has been generally ascertained that theft and highway robberies can only take place by the connivance of these headmen. . . If a *muqaddam* harbours thieves and robbers unknown to the governor, it is fit he should be punished, or even be put to death, that it may be a warning to others to abstain from similar acts.

Collection of Revenue : ' The rules for the collection of revenue from the people and for the prosperity of the kingdom were after this wise : ' There was in every *pargana*, one *amil*, one God-fearing *siqdar*, one treasurer, one *karkun* to write Hindi, and one to write Persian, and he ordered his governors to measure the land every harvest, to collect the revenue according to the measurement, and in proportion to the produce, giving one share to the cultivator, and half a share to the *muqaddam* ; and fixing the assessment with regard to the kind of grain, in order that the *muqaddams* and the *chaudharis*, and *amils* should not oppress the cultivators, who are the support of the prosperity of the kingdom. Before his time it was not the custom to measure the land, but there was a *qanungo* for every *pargana*, from whom was ascertained the present, past, and probable future state of the *pargana*.

[Under Sher Shāh, lands were surveyed under an uniform system of mensuration. He ordered the use of the *gaz-Sikandari* (32 digits.) The land was measured by rope,—for which later on Akbar substituted the bamboo,—into *bhigas*. The terms *bhiga* and *jarib* were interchangeable ; one *jarib* or *bhiga* consisted of 3,600 sq. *gaz* (*Ain.*, II, p. 62). The holding of every *rayat* was separately measured and $\frac{1}{4}$ of the expected produce was assessed as the government revenue. As was the custom under previous Sultans, the cultivator was given the choice of payment either in kind or cash, preference being given to the latter. A *kabuliyat* or agreement, containing a short account of the *rayat's* holding, and the amount to be paid by him to Government, was taken by the *amin* from every individual *rayat*, duly signed and attested ; and he gave in return a *patta* or title-deed to the *rayat*, with a record of the State demand. " Sher Shāh regarded the interests of the ruler and the *rayat*, as identical : ' If a little favour is shown to the *rayat*, the ruler benefits by it.' His general instruction to the revenue officers was—' Be lenient at the time of assessment, but show no mercy at the time of collection.' His revenue-system, popularly known as *Todar*

Mal's bandobast, obtained in Northern India throughout the Mughal period, and in all its essential features has survived in British India under the name of the *rayatwari-settlement,* admired so enthusiastically by the Anglo-Indian administrators."]

'In every *sarkar* he appointed a chief (*Siqdar-i-siqdaran*) and a *Chief Munsif* (*Munsif-i-munsifan*), that they might watch over the conduct of both the *amils* and the people ; that the *amils,* should not oppress or injure the people, or embezzle the King's revenue ; and if any quarrel arose among the *amils,* regarding the boundaries of the *parganas,* they were to settle that no confusion might find its way amongst the King's affairs. If the people, from any lawlessness or rebellious spirit, created a disturbance regarding the collection of the revenue, they were so to eradicate and destroy them with punishment and chastisement that their wickedness and rebellion should not spread to others.'

[The duties of the *Chief Siqdar* resembled those of the *Faujdar* under the Mughals, and discharged functions as under Sikander Lodi. Though a military noble, with a police force of 2,000 to 5,000 troops under him, he was essentially a civil officer like a modern magistrate. The word *munsif* means 'doer of justice' ; the *Chief Munsif* seems to have also acted as a circuit-judge for trying civil suits, and redressing the grievances of the peasants and *muqaddams* at the hands of *pargana* officials.]

Transfer of Officers : Every year, or second year, he changed his *amils,* and sent new ones, for he said, " I have examined much, and accurately ascertained that there is no such income and advantage in other employments as the government of a district. Therefore, I send my good old experienced loyal servants to take charge of districts, that the salaries, profits, and advantages, may accrue to them in preference to others ; and after two years I change them, and send other servants like to them, that they also may prosper, and that under my rule all my old servants may enjoy these profits and advantages, and that the gate of comfort and ease may be opened to them. As with the civil so with the military, he observed this rule of equi-distribution of profits and of labour. Abbās Khān writes : 'And in every place where it served his interests, he kept garrisons. After a time he used to send for the forces which had enjoyed ease and comfort on their *jagirs,* and to send away in their stead the chiefs who had undergone labour and hardships with the victorious army.

Military Organisation : 'His whole army was beyond all limit

or numbering, and it increased every day. The rule regarding the army for guarding the kingdom from the disturbances of rebels, and to keep down and repress contumacious and rebellious *zamindars*, so that no one should think the kingdom undefended, and therefore attempt to conquer it, was as follows :—

'Sher Shāh always kept 150,000 horse, and 25,000 footmen, either armed with match-locks or bows, present with him, and on some expeditions took even more with him. There were also 5,000 elephants in his elephant-sheds. And in every place where it served his interests he kept garrisons ; *e.g.*, in the fort of Gwalior he kept a force to which were attached 1,000 match-lock men. In Bayāna he kept a division, besides a garrison of 500 match-locks ; in Rantambhor another division besides 1,600 match-lock men ; in the fort of Chitor, 3,000 match-lock men ; in the fort of Shadmābad or Māndu was stationed Sujāt Khān with 10,000 horse and 7,000 match-locks. He had his *jagirs* in Hindia and Mālwa. In the fort of Raisin a force was stationed together with 1,000 artillery men ; and in the fort of Chunar, another force also with 1,000 match-lock men ; and in the fort of Rohtas, near Bihar, he kept Ikhtiyār Khān Panni, with 10,000 match-lock men : and Sher Shāh kept treasures without number or reckoning in that fort. . . (Similarly, at Nagaur, Jodhpur, Ajmer, Lucknow, Kālpi, etc.) The kingdom of Bengal he divided into parts, and made Kāzi Fazilat *Amir* of that whole kingdom.'

Prof. Qanungo has observed that to " Sultan Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī belongs the credit of organising the Indian army on a new model. He created an army recruited directly by the central government, paid in cash from the State treasury, officered by nobles of the Sultan's own choice, while corruption was checked by the *dāgh* (branding) system. The armies of the Lodis were of the clannish feudal type, consisting of the quotas of various tribal chiefs enjoying *jagirs* for service. Sher Shāh revived the system of Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī and transformed the army into a truly Imperial institution. The soldier obeyed his immediate commanding officer, not as his personal chief, but as the Emperor's servant. The Emperor combined in himself the functions of the Commander-in-Chief and the Pay-Master-General. . . . In order to take away from the military character of the administration, Sher Shāh took care that in normal times of peace, the military should remain in the background, only as the support of the civil authority."

Branding of Horses : ' Among the rules which Sher Shāh promulgated, was the branding of horses. And he said he ordered it on

this account, that the rights of the chiefs and the soldiers might be distinct, and that the chiefs might not be able to defraud the soldiers of their rights ; and that every one should maintain soldiers according to his rank (*mansab*) and not vary his numbers.

"For," said he, "in the time of Sultan Ibrāhim, and afterwards, I observed that many base nobles were guilty of fraud and falsehood, who at the time their monthly salary was assigned to them, had a number of soldiers ; but when they had got possession of their *jagirs,* they dismissed the greater number of their men without payment, and only kept a few men for indispensable duties, and did not even pay them in full. Nor did they regard the injury to their master's interests, of the ingratitude of their own conduct ; and when their lord ordered a review or assembly of their forces, they brought strange men and horses, and mustered them, but the money they put into their own treasuries. In time of war they would be defeated from paucity of numbers ; but they kept the money, and when their master's affairs became critical and disordered, they, equipping themselves with this very money, took service elsewhere ; so, from the ruin of their master's fortunes, they suffered no loss. When I had the good fortune to gain power, I was on my guard against the deceit and fraud of both soldiers and chiefs, and ordered the horses to be branded, in order to block up the road against these tricks and frauds, so that the chief could not entertain strangers to fill up their ranks."

'Sher Shāh's custom was this that he would not pay their salary unless the horses were branded, and he carried it to such an extent that he would not give anything to the sweepers and women servants about the palace without a brand, and they wrote out descriptive rolls of the men and horses and brought them before him, and he himself compared the rolls when he fixed the monthly salaries and then he had the horses branded in his presence.

Roads and Sarais : 'For the convenience of poor travellers on every road at a distance of two *kos,* he made a *sarai* : and one road with *sarais* he made from the fort he built in the Punjab to the city of Sonārgaon, which is situated in the kingdom of Bengal, on the shore of the ocean. Another road he made from the city of Agra to Jodhpur and Chitor, and one road with *sarais* from the city of Lahore to Multan. Altogether he built 1,700 *sarais* on various roads ; and in every *sarai* he built separate lodging, both for Hindus and for Musalmans, and at the gate of every *sarai* he placed vessels full of water, that any one might drink ; and in every *sarai* he settled Brāhmaṇs for the entertainment of Hindus, to provide hot and cold water, and beds and food, and grain for all their horses ; and it was a rule

in these *sarais*, that whoever entered them received provisions suitable to his rank, and food and litter for his cattle from Government.

'Villages were established all round the *sarais*. In the middle of every *sarai* was a well and a *masjid* of burnt brick ; and he placed an *imām* and a *muazzin* in every *masjid*, together with a custodian (*shahna*), and several watchmen ; and all these were maintained from the land near the *sarai*. On both sides of the highway Sher Shāh planted fruit-bearing trees, such as also gave much shade, that in the hot wind travellers might go along under the trees ; and if they should stop by the way, might rest and take repose. If they put up at a *sarai*, they bound their horses under the trees.

Spies and Informers : 'At every *sarai* were placed two horses for the news reporters. So there were 3,400 horses, in all the *sarais* together, always ready to bring intelligence every day from every quarter. For the enforcement of the regulations which he had established for the protection of the people, Sher Shāh sent trusted spies with every force of his nobles, in order that, inquiring and secretly ascertaining all circumstances relating to the nobles, their soldiers, and the people, they might relate them to him ; for the courtiers and ministers, for purposes of their own, do not report to the King the whole state of the kingdom, lest any disorder or deficiency which may have found its way into the courts of justice should be corrected.

Merchants and Travellers : 'In days of Sher Shāh and of Islām Shāh, the *muqaddams* used to protect the limits of their own villages lest any thief or robber or enemy might injure a traveller, and so be the means of his destruction and death. And he directed his governors and *amils* to compel the people to treat merchants and travellers well in every way, and not to injure at all ; and if a merchant should die by the way, not to stretch out the hand of oppression and violence on his goods as if they were unowned ; for Sheikh Nizāmi (may God be merciful to him !) has said : "If a merchant should die in your country, it is perfidy to lay hands on his property." Throughout his whole kingdom Sher Shāh levied customs on merchandise only in two places, *viz.*, when it came from Bengal, customs were levied at Gharri (Sikhri-gali) ; and when it came from the direction of Kurāsan, the customs were levied on the borders of the kingdom ; and a second duty was levied at the place of sale. No one dared to levy other customs, either on the road or on the ferries, in town or village. Sher Shāh, moreover, forbade his officials to purchase anything in the *bazars* except at the usual *bazar* rates and prices.

Protection of Cultivators : 'One of the regulations Sher Shāh made was this : That his victorious standards should cause no injury to the cultivation of the people and when he marched he personally examined into the state of the cultivation, and stationed horsemen round to prevent people from trespassing on anyone's field. If he saw any man injuring a field, he would cut off his ears with his own hands, and hanging the corn (which he had plucked off) round his neck, would have him to be paraded through the camp. And if from the narrowness of the road, any cultivation was unavoidably destroyed, he would send *amirs*, with a surveyor, to measure the cultivation so destroyed, and give compensation in money to the cultivators. If he entered an enemy's country, he did not enslave or plunder the peasantry of that country, nor destroy their cultivation. "For," said he, "The cultivators are blameless, they submit to those in power, and if I oppress them they will abandon their villages, and the country will be ruined and deserted, and it will be a long time before it again becomes prosperous."

Charities : 'His kitchen was very extensive, for several thousand horsemen and private followers fed there ; and there was a general order, that if any soldier or religious personage, or any cultivator, should be in need of food, he should feed at the King's kitchen, and should not be allowed to famish. The daily cost of these meals was 500 gold pieces (*ashrafis*). Sher Shāh often said : "It is incumbent upon kings to give grants to *imāms* ; for the prosperity and populousness of the cities of Hind are dependent on the *imāms* and holy men ; and the teachers and travellers, and the necessitous, who cannot come to the King, will praise him, being supported by those who have grants ; and the convenience of travellers and the poor is thereby secured, as well as the extension of learning, of skill and religion, for whoever wishes that God Almighty should make him great, should feed the *ulema* and pious persons, that he may obtain honour in this world and felicity in the next."

Buildings : "Sher Shāh left the indelible impress of his personality, not only upon the useful but also on the ornamental side of the imperial edifice," writes Prof. Qanungo. "His noble tomb at Sāsarām still brings home to the mind of the beholder the grandeur of the Empire,—severe yet graceful ; externally Muslim, but Hindu inside." V. A. Smith observed : "The mausoleum of Sher Shāh at Sāsarām, built on a lofty plinth, in the midst of a lake, is one of the

best designed and most beautiful buildings in India unequalled among the earlier buildings in the northern provinces for grandeur and dignity. Cunningham was half inclined to prefer it even to the Tāj. The dome, although not equal in size to the Gol Gumbaz of Bijapur, is 13 ft. wider than that of the Agra monument. Externally the architecture is wholly Muhammadan, but Hindu corbelling and horizontal architraves are used in all the inner door-ways, as at Jaunpur. The style may be described as intermediate between the austerity of the Tughlak buildings and the feminine grace of Shāh Jahān's masterpiece." Havell saw in it the personality and character of Sher Shāh : " Though forbidden by his creed to make himself a graven image, the Musalman monarch took so much interest in the planning of his last resting place, that unconsciously he gave it the impress of his own character, and the builders formed it after his own image."

" If my life lasts long enough," said Sher Shāh, " I will build a fort in every *sarkar*, on a suitable spot, which may in times of trouble become a refuge for the oppressed and a check to the contumacious ; and I am making all the earthenwork *sarais* of brick that they also may serve for the protection and safety of the highway." So he built the fort of Rohtas, on the road to Khurāsan, to hold in check Kashmir and the country of the Gakkars, about 60 *kos* from Lahore, and fortified and strengthened it exceedingly. There was never seen a place so fortified, and immense sums were expended upon the work. He called that fort *Little Rohtas*.

' The former capital city of Delhi was at a distance from the Jumna, and Sher Shāh destroyed and rebuilt it, by the bank of the Jumna, and ordered two forts to be built in that city, with the strength of a mountain, and loftier in height ; the smaller fort for the governor's residence ; the other, the wall round the entire city, to protect it ; and in the governor's fort he built a *jāma masjid* of stone, in the ornamenting of which much gold, *lapis lazuli* and other precious articles were expended. But the fortifications round the city were not completed when Sher Shāh died. He destroyed also the old city of Kanauj, the former capital of the kings of India, and built a fort of burnt brick there ; and on the spot where he had gained his victory, he built a city, and called it *Sher Sūr*. I can find no satisfactory reason for the destruction of the old city, and the act was very unpopular,' writes Abbās Sarwāni.

' From the day that Sher Shāh was established on the throne,

no man dared to breathe in opposition to him : nor did any one raise the standard of contumacy or rebellion against him ; nor was any heart-tormenting thorn produced in the garden of his kingdom, nor was there any of his nobles or soldiery, or a thief or a robber, who dared to direct the eye of dishonesty to the property of another ; nor did any theft or robbery even occur within his dominions. Travellers and wayfarers during the time of Sher Shāh's reign were relieved from the trouble of keeping watch ; nor did they fear to halt even in the midst of a desert : and the *zamindars* for fear lest any mischief should occur to the travellers, and that they should suffer, or be arrested on account of it, kept watch over them. And in the time of Sher Shāh's rule, a decrepit old woman might place a basketful of gold ornaments on her head and go on a journey, and no thief or robber would come near her, for fear of the punishment which Sher Shāh inflicted. Such a shadow spread over the world, that a decrepit person feared not a Rustam. During his time all quarrelling, disputing, fighting and turmoil, which is the nature of the Afghans, was altogether quieted and put a stop to, throughout the countries of Roh and of Hindustan. Sher Shāh, in his wisdom and experience, was a second Haider. In a very short period, he gained the dominion of the country, and provided for the safety of the highways, the administration of the Government, and the happiness of the soldiery and people. God is a discerner of righteousness ! '

So closes Abbās Khān Sarwāni's account of Sher Shāh. We might add a few modern estimates to his.

Some Modern Estimates of Sher Shāh :

E. B. Havell : " Sher Shah showed brilliant capacity as an organiser, both in military and civil affairs. By dint of indefatigable industry and personal attention to the smallest details of administration, he restored law and order throughout Hindustan in the short space of five years. And no doubt the long-suffering, law-abiding rayat was grateful to the iron-handed Afghan for an interval of comparative peace, and for protection against indiscriminate plunder, though he might sometimes sigh for the golden days when even Sudras were Aryan free-men, and the laws of the village Assemblies were respected even by the King of kings and Supreme Lord of the Five Indies."

William Erskine : " He rose to the throne by his own talents,

and showed himself worthy of the high elevation which he attained. In intelligence, in sound sense and experience, in his civil and financial arrangements, and in military skill, he is acknowledged to have been by far the most eminent of his nation, who ever ruled in India. . . .Sher Shah had more of the spirit of the legislator and guardian of his people than any prince before Akbar."

H. G. Keene : "His brief career was devoted to the establishment of the unity which he had long ago perceived to be the great need of his country. Though a devout Muslim, he never oppressed his Hindu subjects. His progresses were the cause of good to his people instead of being—as is too often the case in India—the occasions of devastation. . . .It is a welcome task to take note of such things as a break in the long annals of rapine and slaughter, and we can do so without hesitation ; for the acts of Sher Shah are attested by his enemies, writing when he was dead, and when his dynasty had passed away for ever."

V. A. Smith : "Sher Shah was something more than the capable leader of a horde of fierce Afghans. He had a nice taste in architecture, manifested especially in the noble mausoleum at Sasseram (Sahasram) in Bihar which he prepared for himself. . . .He also displayed an aptitude for civil government and instituted reforms, which were based to some extent on the institutions of Alauddin Khilji and were developed by Akbar. . . . He reformed the coinage, issuing an abundance of silver money, excellent in both fineness and execution. That is a good record for a stormy reign of five years. If Sher Shah had been spared he would have established his dynasty, and the 'Great Mughals' would not have appeared on the stage of history."

Kalikacharan Qanungo : "The accession of Sher Shah marked the beginning of that era of liberal Islam which lasted till the reaction of Aurangzeb's reign. . . .Sher Shah may justly dispute with Akbar the claim of being the first who attempted to build up an Indian nation. . . .The work of Sher Shah's administrative genius did not perish with his dynasty, but lasted throughout the Mughal period with some inevitable changes due to the greater expansion of the empire. It forms the substratum of our present administrative system. The modern magistrate and collector of British India is the official successor of the *Shiqdar-i-shiqdaran* of Sher Shah, and the *tahsildar* that of the *amil* or *amin*. . . .The revenue and currency system which prevailed in India with very little modification down to the middle

of the XIX century were not the achievements of Akbar but of Sher Shah."

Sher Shāh's Coinage : "Sher Shah's reign constituted an important test point in the annals of Indian coinage, not only in its specific mint reforms, but also as correcting the progressive deteriorations of the previous kings, and as introducing these many reforms which the succeeding Mughals claimed as their own." (Thomas, *Chronicles of the Pathan Kings*, p. 403.)

"Sher Shah is entitled to the honour of establishing the reformed system of currency which lasted throughout the Mughal period, was maintained by the East India Company down to 1835, and is the basis of the existing British currency. He finally abolished the inconvenient billon coinage of mixed metal, and struck well-executed pieces in gold, silver, and copper, to a fixed standard of both weight and fineness. His silver rupees, which weigh 180 grains, and contain 175 grains of pure silver, being thus practically equal in value to the modern rupee, often have the king's name in Nāgari characters in addition to the usual Arabic inscriptions."—(V. A. Smith, *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, ii, pp. 145-6.)

"His coins also illustrate the rapidity with which he conquered the countries settled under his rule. The land survey, construction of roads, and establishment of mint towns seem to follow almost in the wake of his conquering armies."—(Qanungo, *Sher Shah*, p. 383.)

Sher Shāh's Successors :

The brief history of Sher Shāh's successors has little interest beyond revealing in detail the nature of the situation that enabled Humāyun to recover his lost patrimony. But, the Afghan episode has a value for us as containing in a nut-shell, as it were, the same lesson that is more elaborately illustrated in the history of the Mughal Empire. As Keene has said, "It is the misfortune of absolute monarchy that the best rulers can never ensure a worthy successor." Sher Shāh's sovereignty was assumed by persons who were labouring under the usual trials of princes born for power which they had done nothing to acquire. Sher Shāh himself, as we have seen, more than once attributed the loss of Afghan dominion to their dissensions. When the strong hand restraining them was removed, the old contentiousness of the Afghan nobility sprang up again. The whole period of Salim's (Sher Shāh's son) reign was consumed in intrigues and fruit-

less quarrels : and on his death in November 1554, his son was murdered and a scene of confusion ensued. "The native Muslims fell into such a state of quarrelsome imbecility that the chief command fell into the hands of a Hindu chandler named Hemu."

Salim Shāh Sūr : Abdulla, author of *Tarikh-i-Dāudi,* writes :— 'It is related in the *Akbar Shāhi*, that when Sher Shāh rendered up his life to the angel of death in Kālinjar,. . . the nobles perceived that Adil Khān (Sher Shāh's eldest son) would be unable to arrive with speed (from Rantambhor), and as the State required a head, they despatched a person to summon Jalāl Khān who was nearer (in the town of Rewan, in the province of Bhātā). He reached Kālinjar in five days, and by the assistance of Isā Hajjab and other grandees was raised to the throne near the fort of Kālinjar, on the 15th of the month Rabiul awwal 952 A.H. (25 May 1545 A.D.). He assumed the title of Islām Shāh.

'After ascending the throne,' continues Abdulla, 'and inquiring concerning the ordinances of Sher Shāh, he left some as they were, and changed others to suit his own ideas.' He was an improver, like his father, observes Elphinstone, "but rather in public works than in laws." Other writers look upon his regulations as "silly and nonsensical, devised chiefly with the object of reversing his father's policy, and establishing a name for himself as a legislator. Islām Shāh was desirous of showing the world that he also had 'his own thunder'." But a statement of these reforms and enactments will speak for itself. Badāuni, whose account is given below, says, 'These rules were in force till the end of the reign of Salim Shāh, and the compiler of this history (*Tarīkh-i-Badāuni*) witnessed the scene above described, when he was of tender age, that is, in the year 955 A.H., when he accompanied his maternal grandfather (may God extend His grace to him !) to the camp of Farid Taran, commander of 5,000 horse which was then pitched in the district of Bajwāra, a dependency of Bayāna.'

'Salim Shāh in the beginning of his reign issued orders that as the *sarais* of Sher Shāh were two miles distant from one another, one of similar form should be built between them for the convenience of the public ; and that a mosque and a reservoir should be attached to them, and that vessels of water and of victuals, cooked and uncooked, should be always kept in readiness for the entertainment of Hindu as well as Muhammadan travellers. In one of his orders he directed that all the *madad-ma'sh* and *aima* tenures in Hindustan which Sher Shāh had granted, and all the *sarais* which he had

built and the gardens he had laid out, should not be alienated, and that no change should be made in their limits. He took away from the nobles all the dancing-girls maintained in their courts, according to the common practice of Indiā. He also took from them all their elephants, and let none of them retain more than a sorry female, adopted only for carrying baggage. It was enacted that red tents should be in the exclusive use of the sovereign. He resumed and placed under immediate management of the State, the lands enjoyed by the troops, and established pecuniary payments in lieu, according to the rates fixed by Sher Shāh. Circular orders were issued through the proper channels to every district, touching on matters religious, political, and fiscal, in all their most minute bearings, and containing rules and regulations, which concerned not only the army, but cultivators, merchants, and persons of other professions, and which were to serve as guides to the officials of the State, *whether they were in accordance with the Muhammadan law or not* ; a measure which obviated the necessity of referring any of these matters to *Kāzis* and *Muftis*.

Character of the Administration : The real character of Salim Shāh's administration is perhaps best represented by the author of the *Tarīkh-i-Dāudi* : 'Islām Shāh', writes Abdulla, 'resembled his father in his pomp and splendour, and in his desire for dominion and conquest. On the day of his accession to the throne, he ordered two months' pay to be distributed in ready money to the army : one month of this he gave them as a present ; the other as subsistence money. Moreover, he resumed all the *jagirs* in the provinces of his government, and allowed their holders a stipend in money from his treasury instead. To those who had received stipends during the reign of Sher Shāh he gave lands and *parganas*. During the time of Sher Shāh, a place had always been established in the royal camp for the distribution of alms to the poor. Instead of this, Islām Shāh directed that arrangements for the giving of alms should be made at each of the *sarais*, and that indigent travellers should be supplied with whatever they needed, and that mendicants should receive a daily pittance, in order that they might be contented and at peace. He had, whilst Prince, 6,000 horsemen with him, and he now promoted all of them : He made privates officers, and officers nobles. These regulations of Islām Shāh caused those of Sher Shāh to fall into disuse. Many of Sher Shāh's principal nobles were disgusted at what they regarded as acts tending to dishonour them, and became ill-disposed towards Islām Shāh. He, in his turn, was likewise suspicious of these grandees, and thus *the relations which existed between the great chiefs and the King were changed in their nature.*'

Revolts and Disturbances : 'Islām Shāh was a monarch of treacherous and vindictive disposition. When he secured power in his own hands, he dissimulated loyalty to his elder brother, Adil Khān, who had been nominated Sher Shāh's heir-apparent. But Adil Khān was a man who loved ease and comfort. So he preferred to retire to the *jagir* of Bayāna, which was assigned to him. Yet Islām Shāh made an attempt to secure his person. 'The latter however,' says Ferishta, 'having timely information of the design, fled to Mewāt, where Khāwas Khān then resided, and acquainted that chief, with tears in his eyes, of his brother's baseness. Khāwas Khān, whose honour was concerned, roused with indignation, seized Ghāzi Mahally (Islām Shāh's agent), and went into open rebellion. Khāwas Khān's character was so high, that by writing letters to the nobles of the court, he gained many partisans, and accompanied by the prince Adil Khān, he marched towards Agra......(But) although his troops behaved with great bravery, he was overthrown by Salim Shāh. After the action, the prince Adil Khān fled, in the first instance, to Patna ; but, soon after disappearing, was never again heard of ; the insurgent chiefs were obliged to retreat among the Kumaon hills, but only for a time.

'After these events, Islām Shāh became mistrustful of all his nobles, and took measures to overthrow them. He put some of them in prison and deprived others of all their possessions. He also placed his own nephew, Mahmūd Khān, the son of Adil Khān, under surveillance, and ruined, first Kutb Khān Sūr, then Barmazid Sūr, Jalāl Khān Sūr, and Zain Khān Niazi. He slew Jalāl Khān Sūr, as well as his brother, by binding them to the feet of an elephant, after which he caused the aforesaid nobles to be placed on the elephant, and paraded through the camp. The hearts of the nobles of Sher Shāh were filled with terror and consternation. After this he put many others to death, amongst whom was Khāwas Khān, who bore the title of Masnad Ali, who was impaled on some frivolous pretext. He continued for a long time to distress the whole of his subjects, and to make God's servants miserable ; but towards the end of his reign he behaved towards the people with liberality and generosity.'

What has been said should suffice to illustrate the character of Salim Shāh's reign. There were other rebellions and disturbances, principally of the Niazis under Āzam Humāyun, and the Gakkars under Sultan Ādam Gakkar (who had delivered Kāmrān into the hands of Humāyun). To the last, Salim Shāh was engaged in reducing these disorders. In the course of these troubled years, more than one attempt was made on his life. 'Certain nobles desired to place Mubāriz Khān, (who possessed the title of Adali) on the throne.' As the rebellious Niazis declared : "*No one obtains a kingdom by heritance ; it belongs to whoever can gain it by sword.*" Islām Shāh was informed of the treason of these people, and immediately endeavoured to assemble them in one place, and there punish them. The chiefs

being warned of his intention, met together, and entered into an agreement not to present themselves at the *darbār* all at once, but to go one by one. Islām Shāh was day and night thinking and planning how he might best put them to death. But the decrees of Providence do not change to suit human wishes and counsels, and he was suddenly taken ill and confined to bed in the fort of Gwalior (which had been long his favourite residence)....He summoned (his wife) Bībi Bai, and said, " I have the reins still in my hands, and have as yet lost nothing. If you desire your son to reign after me, tell me to do it, and I will cause your brother Mubāriz Khān to be removed." On this Bībi Bai began to weep. Islām Shāh said, " You know best ! "

And then suddenly as he was speaking, he gave up the ghost in the twinkling of an eye, and departed to the next world in the year 961 A.H. (November 1554).

Many of the troops who were not aware of the King's illness, on receiving the unexpected intelligence of his decease, were much perturbed and distressed, as it threw their affairs into confusion. His body was taken from Gwalior, and deposited at Sāsarām, near that of his father.

Fīrūz Shāh Sūr : Ferishta narrates the sequel thus :—Salim Shāh ' was succeeded by his son, the Prince Fīrūz, then twelve years of age, who was placed on the throne by the chiefs of the tribe of Sūr at Gwalior. He had not reigned three days, when Mubāriz Khān, the son of Nizām Khān Sūr (Sher Shāh's brother) at once the nephew of the late Sher Shāh, and brother-in-law of Salim Shāh, assassinated the young Prince, and ascending the throne, assumed the title of Mahmūd Shāh Adil....On the third day after the death of Salim Shāh, Mubāriz Khān, having entered the female apartments, slew with his own hand the unhappy Prince, whom he dragged from the arms of his mother, Bībi Bai, his own sister.' When her husband had always insisted upon getting rid of her brother, Mubāriz Khān being too dangerous for the Prince, she had always replied, " My brother is too fond of dissipation and pleasure to encumber himself with the load of anxiety which belongs to a King." But the decrees of Providence do not change to suit human wishes and counsels ! '

Three Kings :

1. *Mahmūd Shāh Adali* : Mubāriz, after the murder of his nephew, ascended the throne of Sher Shāh and assumed the title of

Mahmūd Shāh Adil. But his character soon changed his self-styled epithet of *Adil* (the just), into first, *Adali* (the foolish), and then into *Andhali* (blind). Elphinstone remarks, "His character was not such as to efface the memory of his crime ; he was grossly ignorant, fond of coarse debauchery and low society, and as despicable from his incapacity as he was odious for his vices." One illustration from Ferishta may be here cited :—'Having often heard much in praise of the munificence of former kings, particularly of Mahomed Tughlak, and mistaking prodigality for liberality, he opened the treasury, and lavished riches on all ranks without distinction. As he rode out he discharged amongst the multitude golden-headed arrows, which sold for ten or twelve rupees each. This wanton extravagance soon left him without any of the treasure of his predecessors.' When he had nothing of his own to give, he resumed the governments and *jagirs* of his nobles, and bestowed them on his favourites 'among whom, one Hemu, a Hindu shop-keeper, whom his predecessor, Salim Shāh, had made superintendent of the markets, was entrusted with the whole administration of affairs. The King in the meantime, heedless of what passed, spent his time in excess among the inmates of his harem. This naturally created him enemies among the Afghan chiefs, who, having conspired against his life, revolted from his authority. The King became daily more and more despicable in the eyes of his subjects, while all regularity in the Government ceased.'

2. *Ibrāhim Khān Sūr* : Under these chaotic circumstances, the more ambitious among the nobles and princes tried to feather each his own nest. Tāj Khān Kirāni, for instance, openly declared, "that affairs had taken such an extraordinary turn at Court, that he was determined to push his own fortune." His rebellion obliged the King to take the field in person, and go in his pursuit towards Chunar. Taking this opportunity, Ibrāhim Khān, the King's cousin and brother-in-law, 'raised a considerable army, and getting possession of the city of Delhi, ascended the throne, and assumed the ensigns of royalty. From thence he marched to Agra, and reduced the circumjacent provinces. . .Mahmūd Shāh Adali, finding himself betrayed, fled to Chunar, and contented himself with the government of the eastern provinces, while Ibrāhim Khān retained possession of the western territory.'

3. *Sikander Shāh Sūr* : Ibrāhim Khān no sooner ascended the throne of Delhi than another competitor arose in the Punjab in the

person of the Prince Ahmad Khān, another nephew of Sher Shāh, whose sister was married to Mahmūd Shāh Adali. Ahmad Khān, having procured the aid of Haibat Khān and other chiefs, who had been created nobles by the late Salim Shāh, assumed the title of Sikander Shāh, and marching with 10 or 12 thousand horse towards Agra, encamped at Karra, within twenty miles of that city. Ibrāhim Khān opposed him with 70,000 horse, but nevertheless was defeated. He then, abandoning his capital, retreated to Sāmbhal, while Sikander Khān took possession both of Delhi and Agra. He had not long enjoyed his good fortune, however, when Humāyun advanced into the Punjab to recover his dominion, with what consequence we have already witnessed. After his defeat at Sirhind he fled to the Siwālik mountains, from whence he was expelled, and sought refuge in Bengal, where he assumed the reins of government, and shortly after died.

End of the Sūr Dynasty :

A last flicker of hope had been roused among the Afghans, when Sikander, having ascended the throne at Agra, held a magnificent festival, and calling together all his chiefs, spoke to this effect :—

"I esteem myself as one of you : having thus far acted for the commonweal, I claim no superiority. Bahlol raised the tribe of Lodi to glory and reputation ; Sher Shāh rendered the tribe of Sūr illustrious ; and now Humāyun the Mughal, heir to his father's conquests, is watching an opportunity to destroy us all, and re-establish his government. If, therefore, you are sincere, and will set aside private faction and animosities, we may still retain our kingdom ; but if you think me incapable of rule, let an abler head and a stronger arm be elected from among you, that I also may swear allegiance to him : I promise most faithfully to support him, and will endeavour to maintain the kingdom in the hands of the Afghans who have retained it by their valour for so many years." The Afghan chiefs, after this appeal, answered with one accord : "We unanimously acknowledge you, the nephew of our Emperor Sher Shāh, our lawful sovereign." Calling then for the *koran*, all swore both to observe allegiance to Sikander, and to maintain unanimity among themselves.'

But, in a few days, Ferishta tells us, 'the chiefs began to dispute about governments, honours, and places, and the flames of discord were rekindled, and blazed fiercer than ever, so that every one reproached his neighbour with the perfidy of which each was equally guilty.'

The other members of the Sūr family did not fare better than

Sikander. When he was fighting against the Mughals, the other Sūrs, instead of joining hands with him to repel their common enemy, were fighting among themselves. Ibrāhim Khān marched to Kālpi, while at the same time Mahmūd Shāh Adali detached his *vezir* Hemu, with an army well appointed in cavalry, elephants, and artillery, from Chunar, with a view to recover the western Empire. Hemu attacked Ibrāhim Shāh at Kālpi, and having defeated him, he was compelled to fly to his father (Ghāzī Khān) at Bayāna, pursued by Hemu who besieged him in that city for three months. Meanwhile, the ruler of Bengal—also a Sūr—led his army against Adali and obliged Hemu to return hastily. Emboldened by this Ibrāhim pursued him to Agra ; but being again defeated once more retired to Bayāna. After some adventures in Bundelkhand, which had become independent under Baz Bahādur, he fled to Orissa, where he suffered an ignominious death during the reign of Akbar. Mahomed Shāh Sūr of Bengal took refuge in Bundelkhand, but being pursued by Hemu was soon slain. 'Mahmūd Shāh Adali, after this victory, instead of proceeding to Agra, returned to Chunar, to assemble more troops in order to carry on the war against Humāyun ; but he was soon after informed of that monarch's death, which induced him to detach Hemu, with 50,000 horse, and 500 elephants towards Agra, not daring to leave Chunar himself, on account of the faction which prevailed among his countrymen the Afghans.' The rest of the story belongs naturally to the reign of Akbar. After the defeat and death of Hemu, Mahmūd Shāh's fortunes declined rapidly. Khizr Khān, the next ruler of Bengal, avenged himself for his father's death, by wresting a great part of the eastern provinces out of the hands of Adali, whom he eventually defeated and slew.

This sudden and sharp denouement of the promising and glorious epoch, opened by the dramatic successes of Sher Shāh, appears to have been equally marked by a sad and devastating famine. Badāuni gives the following description of the plight of the people who had already suffered enough from the chaotic conditions incidental to constant warfare :—

'At this time a dreadful famine raged in the eastern provinces, especially in Agra, Bayāna, and Delhi, so that one *seer* of grain (*juwari*) rose to 2½ *tankās*, and even at that price could not be obtained. Many of the faithful closed their doors, and died by tens and twenties, and even in greater numbers, and found neither coffin nor grave. Hindus perished in the same numbers. The common people fed upon the seeds of the thorny

acacia, upon dry herbage of the forest, and on the hides of the cattle which the wealthy slaughtered and sold. After a few days, swellings rose on their hands and feet, so that they died, and the date is represented by the words *khasm-i-izad* : "wrath of God." The author with his own eyes witnessed the fact that men ate their own kind, and the appearance of the famished sufferers was so hideous that one could scarcely look upon them. What with scarcity of rain, the famine and the desolation, and what with uninterrupted warfare for two years, the whole country was a desert, and no husbandmen remained to till the ground. Insurgents also plundered the cities.'

SOME RELEVANT DATES

A.D.

1541 Hindāl forsakes Humāyun and captures Kandahār. Kāmrān besieges it for six months. Khizr Khān, governor of Bengal, deposed by Sher Shāh ; reorganisation of the province.

1542 Sher Shāh divides his Empire into 116,000 fiscal units, each governed by five officials. Francis Xavier, first Jesuit missionary, lands at Goa. Birth of Akbar at Amarkot. Sadāshiva Rāya nominally succeeds Achyuta Rāya at Vijayanagara ; Rāma Rāya and his brothers in power.

1543 Sher Shāh captures Rāisin by strategy. Humāyun goes to Persia, via Kandahār, leaving Prince Akbar in the charge of Askari. Golkonda and Vijayanagara join in alliance against Bijapur.

1544 Humāyun received by Shāh Tahmāsp Safavi ; becomes Shiah and obtains help to re-conquer Hindustan. Sher Shāh conquers Chitor, Nagaur and Ajmer.

1545 Humāyun takes Khandahār ; Askari and Hindāl join him ; Kāmrān flies to Sind. Sher Shāh's death at Kālinjar. Accession of Islām Shāh at Delhi. Muhammad Khān Sūr assumes royalty in Bihar and Bengal.

1546 Ports of Gujarat harried by the Portuguese. Death of Martin Luther.

1547 Triple Alliance between Vijayanagara, Ahmednagar, and the Portuguese against Bijapur. Kāmrān's flight from Kabul and defeat at Badakhshān.

1548 Sheikh Alai founder of the Madhī sect, martyred at Agra.

1549 Humāyun's failure in Balkh.

1550 Humāyun conquers Kabul from Kāmrān. Accession of Ibrāhim Kutb Shāh at Golkonda.

1551 Birth of Abu-l Faḍl. Death of Hindāl ; Akbar's marriage with Hindāl's daughter.

1552 Civil war in Kashmir. Death of Guru Angad and accession of Guru Amardās.

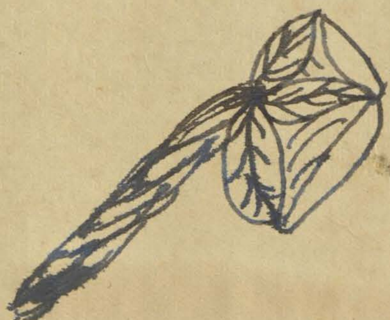
1553 Death of Francis Xavier at Goa (Canonised 1622)), Kāmrān blinded and sent to Mecca (d. 1557).

A.D.

1554 Accession of Muhammad Shāh Ādil at Delhi. Great earth-quake in Kashmir. Rebellions of the nobles against M. Shāh Ādil.

1555 Ibrāhim Khān and Sikander Shāh Sūr ; former defeated by Humāyun at Sirhind. Mālwa independent under Baz Bahādur.

1556 Restoration and death of Humāyun ; defeat of Hemu at the Second battle of Pānipat ; accession of Akbar. Kabul under Akbar's half-brother Mirza Hākim. Death of Ignatius Loyola.



Mueen Aftab

July

Lahore.

1964

July

July

شیخ عبدالرشید

پروفیسر آف ہسٹری

پنجاب یونیورسٹی

لاہور